The Saturday Review of Literature

VOLUME XXIX No. 40 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1946 TEN CENTS

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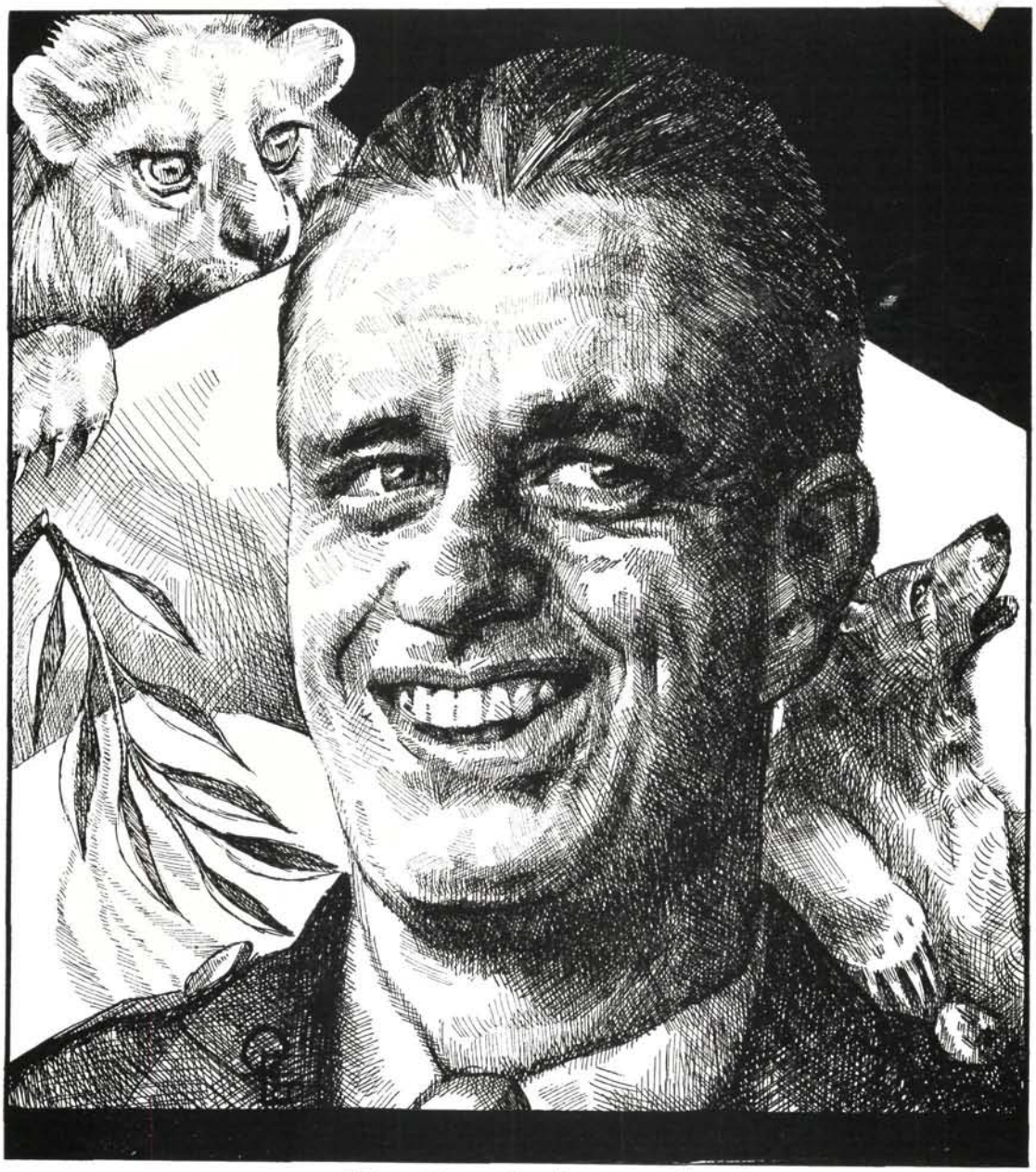

Elliott Roosevelt. *(See page 9)*

The FDR Legend—True and False

By JONATHAN DANIELS

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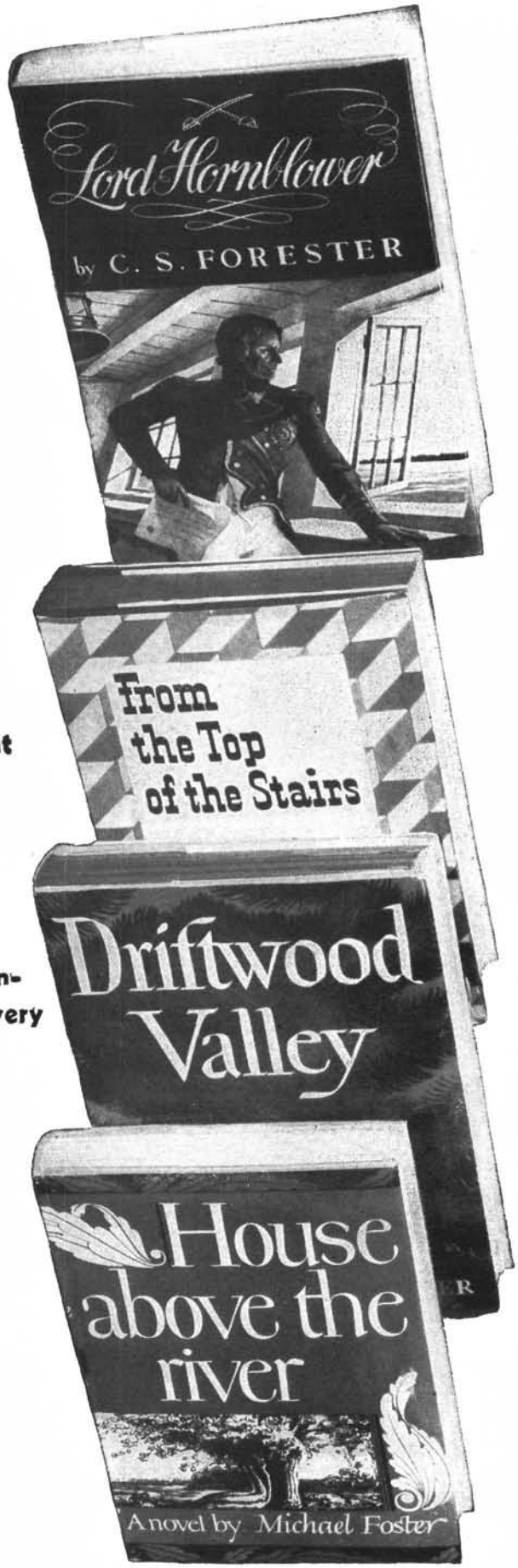

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc. 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Norman Cousins, Vice President; Amy Loveman, Secretary; Lilian Grannon, Assistant Treasurer; Bert Garmise, Circulation Director. Subscriptions $6 a year; $7 in Canada. At least 3 weeks' notice required for changes of address; both old and new addresses must be given. Member of Audit Bureau of Circulations. Printed in U. S. Vol. XXIX, No. 40. October 5, 1946. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Entire issue, Copyright, 1946, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc.

New England Office
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Eleanor Mayo

AUTHOR OF "TURN HOME"

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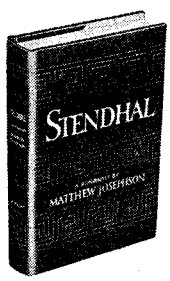
"From where I sit"

BY THE time I find a restaurant for supper these evenings, it's already dark, and those long winter evenings are coming up fast. And **Stendhal** is just the book for them, a book to dip into when the fishing in the Pierian Spring has to be done through the ice. A splendid gift, too, for someone who is a man of distinction; and even for someone you don't like and whom you know won't read it anyway. The latter will be missing a great deal, but then, she always did.

Almost everybody thinks that they could write a book and too many people do. They think so and do so chiefly because to themselves they are just a little bit different. And they are. But the trouble comes in trying to transpose reality into art. Now art in order to appeal to people has to be communicable and deft. It is in this transposition that the trouble usually comes and the writer is at a loss how to make the reality of his life or of his characters' lives readable.

If the writer is writing a novel, he has to know his characters as if for a time he were each of them. That's tough. If he is writing his autobiography, he has to know himself in the way Montaigne meant when he said, oddly enough, "Know thyself." That's tough too. And if he is writing a biography, he has the double duty of knowing the biographee and of making the work read like a novel, historical or otherwise. That's still tougher.



But MATTHEW JOSEPHSON is one of the writers who can do it, and for that matter, does do it in **Stendhal.** Pick up a copy if you haven't already heard it was out, it bears looking into. Here we have Stendhal himself (Henri Beyle to you) a man who knew himself as thoroughly as anyone prior to Freud and who made notes about it before he was nineteen. Stendhal, one of the great writers of the last century, only slightly overshadowed today (a century later) by that new fad, the psychological novel. MR. JOSEPHSON, in a very direct and simple style, helps Stendhal to speak for himself wherever possible.

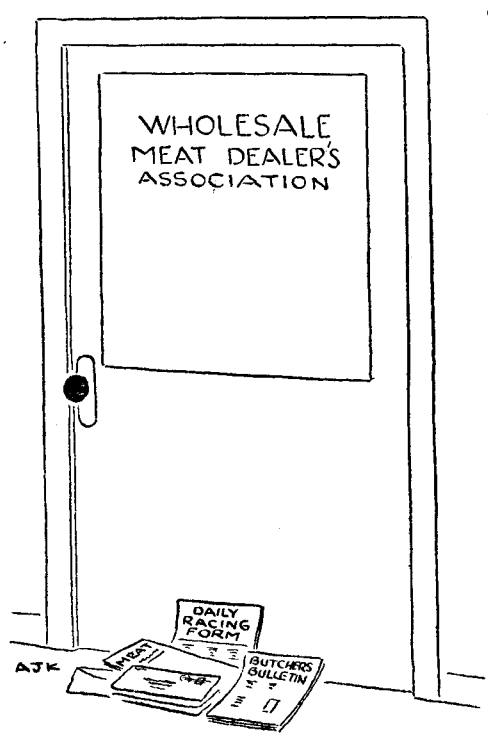
paul

DOUBLEDAY

TRADE Winds

A MATTER OF THREE or four hours by motor from New York, over perfect roads, lie the tranquil and beautiful hills known as the Berkshires. Facing the tallest of them, Greylock, from the porch of Sinclair Lewis's new estate in Williamstown, on the first evening of my vacation, I wondered why anybody was fool enough to spend his life in a clamorous, dirty city. I had left behind a series of unnecessary and crippling strikes, a slumping stock market, pathetically inefficient politicians, and a gang of international "peace delegates" who made the plumbers of Versailles look like wonder boys. An overpowering sense of foreboding had hung over everything, blotting out sunshine and hope. Here, in the cool, crystalline twilight, the vague dread disappeared. All the fools in the world could not spoil the panorama spread out before me, nor the fresh, clean tang in the air.

Literary history had been made in these hills. On Greylock, or Saddleback as it is sometimes called, Thoreau had spent a chilly night in 1853, and complained later that mice had made a fine meal of his shoes while he unsuspectingly was studying old documents he had found in the shack on the summit. In Lenox, a few miles south, was the hill down which Edith Wharton's Ethan Frome had coasted to tragedy. In Stockbridge was the old summer home of the Longfellows, called "The Oxbow." Nearby Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Russell Lowell did their best work. And here, in the year 1851, Herman Melville finished "Moby Dick" at almost the same time that his neighbor, Nathaniel Hawthorne, wrote the last page of his "House of the Seven Gables."



Of the tortuous friendship of Hawthorne and Melville, many tales are told. Periods of mutual confidence and esteem would be followed by months when the two scarcely spoke to each other. The moody Hawthorne usually was responsible for the quarrels; he depressed Melville one night to a point where he almost threw the priceless manuscript of "Moby Dick" into the fireplace. Hawthorne's son, Julian, wrote in his memoirs, "The two people who visited our house most often when we were children were Mr. Melville and the milkman, Luther Butler. We liked the milkman better. We drank his milk—and he never read Father's books!" Melville's final break with Hawthorne was a crushing blow, and the comparative failure of "Moby Dick" completed his disillusionment. The reviewers of his day failed utterly to realize the true worth of the book; his publisher lamented the fact that the $700 advance he had paid on it probably would never be earned back! (Note: A friend of mine who had never written a novel before received a $20,000 advance some weeks ago on the basis of forty typewritten pages and a brief outline.)

TODAY, BESIDES Sinclair Lewis, Alfred Hooper (who prefers to be known as "Peter"), the author of "A Mathematics Refresher" and "The River Mathematics," lives nearby—in Pownal, Vermont. And a few miles farther north, that superb lady and novelist Dorothy Canfield Fisher is the leading citizen of Arlington. In the midst of the Green Mountains (a continuation of the Berkshires), Dorothy Thompson has her home, and here Vincent Sheean has been working on a new novel. The Berkshire Music Festival attracted more literary lights than there is room to mention here.

A flutist at the Festival, I heard, was the very one who figured in a famous Toscanini episode. The maestro interrupted a rehearsal to upbraid this unfortunate fellow and ended by firing him on the spot. The departing

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flutist muttered, "You blank-blank egomaniac, I'd like to . . ." Toscanini cut in angrily, "No, no! None of your apologies!"

THE TWO BOOKSHOPS that I visited in the neighborhood were the soul-satisfying Housatonuc in Salisbury, Connecticut (presided over by the Maurice Firuskis, who raise Dalmatians as a sideline), and the well-stocked establishment of Ray Washburne in Williamstown. Visiting bookmen have learned to fear the prowess of Ray, and the assorted football coaches, classics professors, and four-letter men with whom he hobnobs, at a little game they play in those parts called seven-card stud. The eminent Joe Consolino barely escaped with his breeches one night last month, and as a final indignity, found, by courtesy of Washburne, Jr., a rock quarry, several golf balls, and a live frog in his bed. . . . In Williamstown I met a newspaperman who had toured with Mr. Landon during the election campaign of 1936, and still spoke feelingly about it. "If Landon had made just one more speech," he concluded, "I'm convinced that F. D. R. would have carried Canada."

A stone's throw from Dorothy Fisher's home in Arlington is the summer estate of my partner Bob Haas, and here, with Harry and Bernardine Scherman, I spent four happy days. The Haases have transformed a tumble-down shack and rotting barn into one of the most idyllic spots I know, with an old-fashioned swimming hole to top it off. Their handiwork reminded me of the story of the Negro preacher who complimented a parishioner on his fine garden. "I'm glad to see," he said, "what you have grown here with the aid of the Lord." "Thank you," said the gratified gardener, "but you shoulda seen it when de Lawd was takin' care of it Hisself." . . . There was one humiliating moment in Arlington when Mr. Haas bested Mr. Scherman and myself at a game of horseshoes. Haas had an annoying trick of making four or five ringers in rapid succession by closing his eyes, pitching his shoe wildly, and counting on it to bounce off a rock or something onto the stake, thus nullifying our superior skill—and a miserly handicap of twelve we had shamed him into giving us. . . .

THE SPOTLESS TOWN of Manchester, Vermont, is dominated by the Equinox House, similar in style and architecture to the historic old Grand Union Hotel in Saratoga. Here I ran into Ed Ketcham, of Grosset and Dunlap, with his wife and Mrs. Henry Hoyns. A rip-roaring game of bingo was in

HELEN HOWE,
Critics and Women

Now that Helen Howe's new novel about the intellectual elite is in its fifth printing, you might like to know some of the things that have happened to it since it came off the press. Like all quick best sellers, this one has had a spectacular existence.

As soon as WE HAPPY FEW was published, 15 major critics went all out in praising the book. A wholesale blessing from these 15 critics, the best in the business, is a feat most authors only dream about. We have reported to you before the many satisfying things these critics had to say, so we won't do it here.

On the other hand, you might like a quick look at some of Helen Howe's private mail. The book, as you know, has to do with the intellectual society of Harvard and of Cambridge, Massachusetts. As you would suspect, Miss Howe has heard a few uneasy rumblings from down east on that account. But she has also had many soul-satisfying messages from the same locality, like the one from the daughter of a Harvard faculty member, who pointed out that the characterizations were brilliant, the book marvelous.

It remained for people largely outside of Boston to remind Miss Howe, (which *she* knew all along), that Boston has no corner on intellectual snobs; that the story of WE HAPPY FEW could as well have happened in any of 100,000 localities in the United States. The dean of a famous American college wrote Miss Howe: *"How I wish I could truthfully say that your people could exist only at Harvard, but alas we also have our happy few!"* And he adds, incidentally: *"The book was a delight—a major satire, deftly and brilliantly written."*

A woman in New Jersey, ("whom I do not know," says Miss Howe), wrote her:

"How weary you must be of this insistence (in the reviews) on your unquestionable skill and cleverness! OF COURSE the book is full of rapier thrusts and OF COURSE it crackles with wit. But why doesn't somebody TELL the reading public that what you *don't say is so poignantly said* that the heart too is made to speed its beating in a sensitive reader?

"That's not only a brilliant book—it's a beautiful and tender and vibrant book."

Another correspondent writes: *"How you ever managed to depict that whole blasted bunch of highbrows without using a single one of the tempting specimens in Cambridge, I don't know; but you did it. I guess you did it by digging down into the essence of the thing, recreating therefrom the perfect exemplars. It applies to all such circles everywhere."* And he adds: *"Congratulations on having made a permanent contribution to American literature!"*

As this correspondent points out, Miss Howe *created* her characters. Nevertheless, approximately a dozen figures in and around Cambridge have come to the front and admitted with some outward bitterness and inner satisfaction, that Miss Howe has chiseled *them* into immortality. *"You* have recorded my every move," said one victim who, to this day, remains completely and absolutely unknown to the puzzled author.

Miss Howe, herself, is obviously pleased at the reception of WE HAPPY FEW. And a little surprised. *"What amazes me,"* she told us the other day, while making a quick stopover in the office between London and her new home on the West Coast, *"is the fact that so many women have written to say how well they liked the story. Not the satire, mind you, but the simple love story, and the experiences of Dorothea as a human being. It is a* WOMAN'S *story."*

We in the Inner Sanctum have had so many compliments on this book that we are sure that you will like it even if you are not a woman. So sure that we will *guarantee* it — probably the first time any publisher has sold a novel with the understanding that if you don't like it you can take it back and get a full refund of the purchase price. That's fair, isn't it?

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by Helen Howe

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By R. T. M. SCOTT

AT ALL BOOKSTORES
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progress in the main lobby, but Ed wasn't old enough to qualify for it. Across the road is Walter Hard's Johnny Appleseed Bookshop, but it was closing for the night unfortunately when I came by, and the genial proprietor had departed. I picked up a copy of Margery Sharp's "Britannia Mews," having been reminded of the delight I found in her previous novel "Cluny Brown" by the picture version recently released. "Britannia Mews," I am sorry to say, was a disappointment to me, with the many characters penciled in too vaguely, and the wit and verve of her previous books strangely lacking. Somebody in Maine called it "a road company edition of 'The Forsyte Saga'."

Two other highly touted books I read on my vacation that failed to come up to my expectations were "Animal Farm" and "Rhubarb." The former struck me as obvious and overdone satire, about as subtle as a sledge-hammer blow. H. Allen Smith, who is usually a very funny fellow, seemed to be pitching too hard in his new one. The only real laugh I got out of the whole book came when the mayor appeared to throw out the ball at opening-day baseball ceremonies with seven or eight quick ones under his belt, and after an elaborate warm-up, neatly curved it into the eye of a little lady in Section 5. . . . The books I enjoyed most on this vacation were Jackson's forthcoming "The Fall of Valor," Helen Eustis's "The Horizontal Man" (as neatly written a murder story as I have read in years), and Thomas Bell's "There Comes a Time." Any executive who has to negotiate a union contract once a year owes it to himself to read Bell's book. He will enter his next conference in a more understanding mood. . . .

THE WEATHER IN MAINE this summer was not what it should have been. On one of the few clear nights of our stay, there was an amazing display of the Northern Lights, and a grizzled old guide named Leo had a chance to square accounts with a lady who had offended his dignity by showing greater interest in the whereabouts of Louise Dickinson Rich (author of "We Took to the Woods" and the forthcoming "Happy the Land") than in his tales of fabulous salmon runs or nights under the stars. When Leo spotted the Northern Lights he ran to the tent of his party to advise them to hurry out and see the brilliant illumination. To the lady he added, "Don't forget your pocket flashlight."

"Why?" she asked. "Help you see the Lights," he assured her.

While the others exclaimed with proper awe at the spectacle, the lady concentrated on pointing her Ever-eady in the proper direction. Then she tried it *without* the flashlight.

"Leo," she said, "you won't believe it, but I can see those Lights every bit as well with this thing turned off!"

BENNETT CERF.

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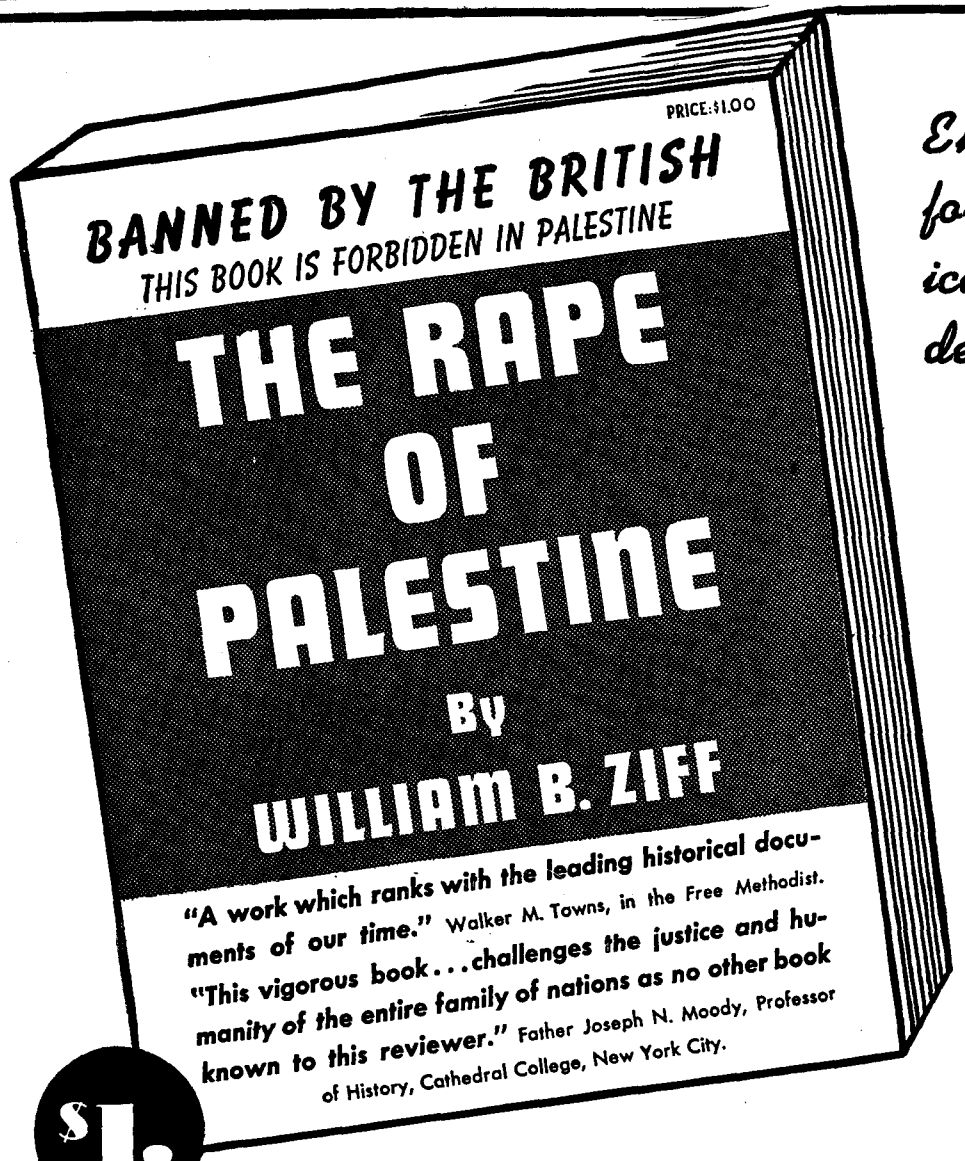
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ABOUT A CAT, A COP, AND A MOUSE

WHEN you come upon love you know it. An old man sitting by a window looking over hills; a woman making chili sauce on an October afternoon; a girl smiling in the night. Having known love, you can then find pleasure in things which remind you of it. Later on to look out over those same hills and see what the old man saw; some other October the smell of chili sauce cooking in a kitchen; another girl, perhaps, to smile in the night. We become fond of things if we can once connect them with love.

Sometimes a stray combination of words will have the kind of emotional satisfaction these other things have had, sometimes a formal poem or a piece of prose. More rarely, a single character will have qualities of wisdom and sadness and truth and beauty which all of us recognize because we have been looking for them for such a long time. When that happens we can relax and be at home again, knowing simply that these things remind us of the wise, sad, true and beautiful things which have touched our own lives. Occasionally whole groups of dissimilar people adopt a character for these very unliterary reasons, and the harassed professional critic has to hurry around to find out why. Under the circumstances the usual verdict of "universality" means that some very common emotional values have been fulfilled in an unexpected way. In our time we know of two specific occasions when this has happened: once when a little man with big shoes and huge dark eyes twirled his cane across a screen; once in the comic strip KRAZY KAT.

Today everyone knows about Charlie Chaplin and a great many people also know about Krazy. But because she was the heroine of a cartoon strip which disappeared in the early twenties, two generations have grown up without her. We're publishing the strips now because there happen to be a number of persons around our offices who think there never has been anything like Krazy, and that nothing just like her is apt to happen again. These people talked about her for years, always with the special fond foolish way of mentioning a thing that puts it apart, until finally a sort of general conclusion was reached that now was the time to do something about it. We talked to the people at King Features who owned the strips and they were happy about the idea. (George Herriman, who created Krazy, died in 1944.) We talked to E. E. Cummings, who we happened to know was a Kat-o-phile from way back. As a result he wrote an introduction which we think is one of the best things that could have happened to this first edition of KRAZY KAT in book form. "Let's make no mistake about Krazy," he says. "A lot of people 'love' because, and a lot of people 'love' although, and a few individuals love. Love is something illimitable; and a lot of people spend their limited lives trying to prevent anything illimitable from happening to them. Krazy, however, is not a lot of people. Krazy is herself. Krazy is illimitable—she loves."

Considering for a moment the possible improbable idea that you have never seen the Kat, here she is. A dumpy little figure who speaks an entirely inconsistent and personal language. She will say, "I aint a Kat and I aint Krazy" and who is to confute her? She will catch a falling star and take it home to keep it warm. She is happy beyond time when Ignatz Mouse hits her with his brick because the brick to Krazy is the living symbol of love. Ignatz, on the other hand, is everything Krazy is not; worldly, dissatisfied, incapable of the realization that hers is the unshakable triumph of love. The triangle, for of course it is a triangle, is completed by Offissa Pupp, law and order in person, who is constantly striving to protect "that dear Kat" from Ignatz' brick.

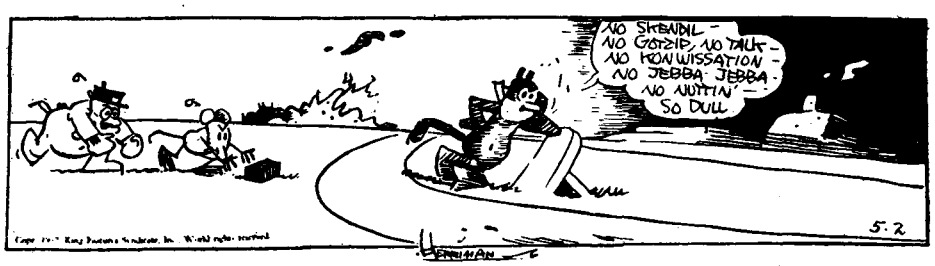
These are the protagonists of George Herriman's strip. None of the things that happen in Cocino County, scene of our drama, are especially predictable except the one certain and unalterable and ever recurring act of Krazy and Ignatz and the brick. It happens and then it happens again. And it's not so easy to say why this comic strip is a wonderful thing and a genuine piece of Americana. It's never easy to say why a thing is dear to the hearts of a people. If you've ever tried to say how certain hills are different from any other hills, or how one smile is different from any other smile, you share our problem. (Not forgetting for a moment that this is a great period for the application of labels and that you are certainly going to be tagged a "Romantic". This has happened to a lot of very respectable people and we won't mind it at all if it happens to us.)

Falling back on allegory, we have one nicer-than-fiction story which may complete our point. It happened when the editor in charge of KRAZY KAT was going through stacks and stacks of the original strips, selecting and arranging those to appear in this book. They were so bulky that she took the whole lot up to an empty room some floors above our offices and spent days and days crawling around on her hands and knees with the strips spread over the floor. When the job was done she was a physically tired editor and the thought of carrying all those bulky cardboards downstairs to her office made her unhappy. So she picked up the phone and asked to be connected with our office boy Pete. Pete hadn't been with us long and anyway he's a little hesitant of the unknown. Our editor, on the other hand, had lived with the Kat for such a long time that she thought it must be known to everyone in the world, certainly to everyone in the office. "Pete," she said, "I'm up on the eighteenth floor with a lot of Krazy Kats. Would you please come up and get them out of here?"

Followed a long pause.

Finally the small voice belonging to Pete said, "Are they alive?"

Our editor made an appropriate answer which we've since forgotten. The important part is what she knew and didn't say—what we know too and are saying now—that KRAZY KAT will always be alive. When you come upon love, you know it.



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The Saturday Review of Literature

The FDR Legend—True and False

JONATHAN DANIELS

THE end of the war which contained the fission of the atom should begin to teach philosophers, if not politicians, something about the fission of human greatness, too. It may be quite as dangerous to the world. In America, at least, the formula seems almost as exact as anything the physicists have found. The development of the Roosevelt legend begins already to fall in line with the Lincoln legend. Lincoln was scarcely dead before men of his party rejected all he hoped for a liberal and conciliatory policy to reunite the nation. But they clung tenaciously and oratorically to Lincoln's strength in the hearts of Americans. He left to his party its only qualities of greatness, liberalism, and humanity. And his name was used as cover for economic and political force, fraud, and reaction in the United States. He belonged to the ages but his memory was used by men who knew what they wanted in their time.

The Roosevelt similarity goes beyond the coincidence of the two men dying in April after each had led to victory but before victory had finally come. Lincoln had a wise man's plan for unity in America; Roosevelt had labored for a unity which might be the basis for security in the world. Roosevelt has been dead for a year and a half now. Those who hate him have done no harm to his stature in the world. But a much greater danger to Roosevelt's hopes lies in the use that may be made of Roosevelt's name by politicians and "statesmen" who pretend to possess it and undertake to use it in the conduct of our foreign affairs for purposes far from any he could possibly have approved. Such a procedure deserves protest and fortunately protest against the whole business now comes from Roosevelt's son.*

> We vacated the vitally important role of operating as a mediator between Great Britain and the Soviet Union [Elliott Roosevelt writes],

*"*AS HE SAW IT.*" By Elliott Roosevelt. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1946. 259 pp. $3.*

—From "The War in Cartoons."

The Light Lives On—April 12, 1945.

> the only two nations whose security interests clash today. Rather than arbitrating those differences, as Father had always been careful to do, we chose sides; worse than that, we did not simply line up *beside* Britain; we lined up *in back* of her.

In making such a protest, Elliott Roosevelt may seem a boy engaged in a man's work. The movement toward war rather than unity for peace seems far advanced. But Elliott is his father's boy. The respectables of reaction will undertake to dismiss him as the enfant terrible of the Roosevelts. This is the Elliott of the affair of the dog Blaze who rode on a priority. This is the twice-divorced Elliott. This is Elliott whose radio debts were settled for much less than face value when he went off to war (though my understanding is that the earnings of the stations were sufficient to have paid those debts if the business men had had the business sagacity to hold on to them).

But this is also Elliott whose war record as a leader in hazardous aerial reconnaissance in Africa and Europe entitled him to such respect as the men who fought this war deserve. This Elliott also attended and saw as his father's intimate companion most of the great conferences at which his father shaped his efforts and his plans for unity in peace for mankind. Elliott has a unique right to speak against a policy, pushed in his father's name, the only trend of which seems to be not toward unity and peace but toward power alliance and war. If this book is only Elliott's book (even Mrs. Roosevelt in an introduction emphasizes that), it is also in its broad outlines a record which will not be easily refuted by living men. And there are living men who, without knowledge of the details Elliott reports, can testify to the basic truth of his report of the workings of his father's mind and his father's clear purposes and plans.

Such understanding of the Roosevelt mind is almost desperately needed now. It seems to be the fate of the greatest American leaders that the facts which serve as basis for the understanding of the meaning of their lives are only disclosed after the decisions on matters which were most important to them have already been made. Some of Lincoln's papers are only being made available to historians next year. The official Nicolay and Hay life of Lincoln was not published until twenty years after he was assassinated, long after the decisions on the re-Union of America had been made by the small-minded politicians who succeeded him.

TODAY, despite the large number of books about Roosevelt, a similar delay seems in prospect before the man's own papers can speak the meaning of the man himself. And a similar distortion of his aims may be made in that time by those who claim to be his successors. The only Roosevelt papers now available for the examination of scholars at the Hyde Park Library are largely inconclusive, irrelevant, and inconsequential material so far as the light they throw on his final purposes is concerned. Indeed, even much material in the Library dealing with the early days

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of the New Deal is not yet available for examination. Another large part of his papers is warehoused in the National Archives in Washington and will not be transferred to the Library until a decision by the Surrogate of Dutchess County, N. Y., as to whether they are government property or not. These papers consist of most of the material at the White House at the time of Roosevelt's death. Even after the decision of the Surrogate, it may be a long time before these papers are available to scholars and citizens.

Perhaps the most important papers so far as the meaning now of Roosevelt's purposes when he died are concerned are those which were in the Map Room of the White House, which handled in wartime the most confidential high level material. All these papers in the Map Room, according to the librarian of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, have "been impounded by President Truman for reasons of security." Nobody can see them without Truman's permission. Undoubtedly such secrecy may be essential even in peacetime in a democracy, but it also may mean a stricter silencing of Roosevelt now than even death should be able to impose on a leader who left an inheritance to the people as well as to the politicians.

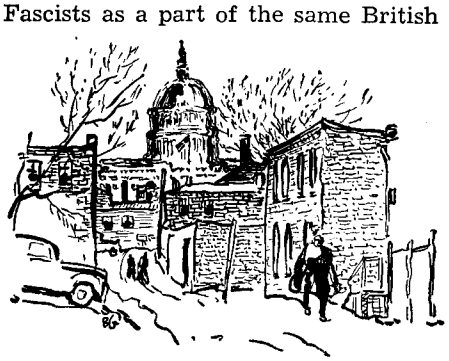
The delays run certainly beyond the decisions. Thus far nobody has been chosen or appointed as the man to work with all these papers, to evaluate them and write the Roosevelt story from them. Some of Roosevelt's family and friends hoped that Samuel Eliot Morison, whom he himself chose as the Navy's historian in World War II, might be brought to the task. Apparently that has not worked out. No one had been chosen fifteen months after Roosevelt died. It is understood that Judge Samuel Rosenman intends to complete the publication of FDR's public papers and addresses. But the prospect of any publication, for the generation which he led and which lost his leadership, of Roosevelt's story from Roosevelt's own private papers by a competent historian seems very remote.

IN THE meantime, Franklin Roosevelt's hopes and purposes depend, for interpretation to a world engaged in fulfilling or destroying them, upon those who shared his intimacy. Though he did not live to complete it, the Harry Hopkins book will probably be the most important of these. But this book by Elliott Roosevelt includes an intimacy with his father who had not only revealed but explained as a President might only trouble to do for a son.

Elliott has written no mere filial memoir of his father, however. His book about his father is loaded with dynamite. There will be plenty to describe it quickly as an indiscreet book. Some will question the good taste of some of the disclosures which he makes. It will be tagged as pro-Russian and anti-British. Admirers of Winston Churchill will regard Elliott's picture of him as an almost comic caricature of a hard-headed, hard-drinking Toryism which never relaxes its Tory purposes even in wartime. Joseph Stalin may seem too sympathetically portrayed as a tough but reasonable man. But there can be no question as to the vividness in action and antagonism with which both figures are presented in such a scene as Elliott's description of the hard-drinking banquet at Teheran where apparently Stalin held his vodka better than Churchill managed his brandy.

But if the book seems sometimes indiscreet, it seems always history on its most intimate level. Nobody who starts it will fail to finish it. Politicians and historians may violently quarrel over it but neither politicians nor historians will ever be able to disregard it. It may, indeed, be the totally unexpected atomic bomb which will blow up the effort to make Roosevelt dead serve the policies which, Elliott believes, Roosevelt living would have rejected with devastating Roosevelt scorn.

Elliott's thesis is very simple. His father had no intention to spend American blood and treasure either to further any communistic plans of Russia or to perpetuate the colonial imperialism of Britain. He believed in the Atlantic Charter, which he shaped and which Churchill signed. In the war he stood by General Marshall and other American military men in resisting efforts of Churchill to shape the fighting to serve post-war British politics on the continent of Europe, and to divert landing craft in the East to serve plans which seemed more clearly related to colonial purposes than to the strategy of general victory. He was both angry and sick when the British used American lend-lease equipment to fire on Greek anti-Fascists as a part of the same British



policy by which it was recently arranged to have American planes write his initials in the sky as a sort of posthumous endorsement. Throughout the war, indeed, he steadily emphasized the necessity for the post-war development, rather than exploitation, of colonial peoples and the need for their ultimate freedom. Again and again he brought Churchill face to face with the results of American policy in the Philippines in the heroic Filipino resistance in contrast with results in Burma, where the British were little better loved than the Japs.

The truth, of course, is that Roosevelt really did believe (despite the energetic forgetfulness of some) that nothing less than a policy of world development rather than colonial exploitation could serve as a basis for world security. That never was a very popular doctrine with the power men of politics, finance, diplomacy, and arms. It was rejected apparently with almost unseemly haste when Roosevelt died.

ABOVE and beyond everything else, however, Franklin Roosevelt believed in the importance of a free, independent American position among the great powers upon whom world security must depend. He understood the ancient European conflict, antedating the present governments of either, between Britain and Russia—between Britain and any other strong nation on that continent—for the domination of Europe. It was not his purpose to allow America's great, free, independent force for peace in the world to be lost in power politics on that continent. Today his son thinks that position has not merely been lost but deliberately vacated and the younger Roosevelt uses a phrase to explain it like one which Woodrow Wilson used to explain the American destruction of peace before—"a small group of willful men."

In that group today Elliott Roosevelt includes the career men in the State Department "whom Father never trusted." In general the lack of trust was well-founded—and often Franklin Roosevelt made it well known. Elliott quotes him: "You know any number of times the men in the State Department have tried to conceal messages to me, delay them, hold them up somehow, just because some of those career diplomats aren't in accord with what they know I think. They should be working for Winston."

There seems to be something in the American diplomat when he becomes a diplomatic snob (there are able exceptions who do not) which makes him a sycophant also to British diplomats and British diplomacy. But the

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really dangerous men to plans for peace and to the rejection of the Roosevelt hope for world unity fostered by American independence are, as Elliott Roosevelt says, "the reactionaries of both major parties in Congress, men who have decided that it is more important to choose up sides for the future than it is to work together for the future."

I am afraid, however, that it is no "small group." It is certainly not composed merely of political or diplomatic officials in Washington. The "small group of willful men" who are building fear rather than peace includes newspaper publishers who fought Roosevelt nearly every foot of his way. It includes big business men (some of whom before the war did not hesitate to enter cartel arrangements with Germans while they demanded that Roosevelt "free" business in the United States), and little business men who have been taught by their biggers, if not their betters, to fear communism more than war.

There are votes as well as fears involved in this process, and Irish politicians and Claghorn senators. Indeed, while world politicians meet in Paris, it has certainly not escaped the notice of politicians at home that the building of fears might serve as a basis for a reactionary Democratic coalition to succeed Roosevelt's coalition of good will. And, however bitter, frightened, and backward looking such a new coalition might be, it could still march under Roosevelt's courageous name. It might be a smart plan. It would attract campaign contributions. Also, millions of Americans seem to have withdrawn—or been pushed by their priests, politicians, and newspapers—into their fears and suspicions once again. There is no man living with the courage and confidence, the good will and the good sense, to remind us that what we have to fear is fear itself. Perhaps there is no compelling voice to make it also clear today that, if we are impelled by our fears along the road to war, we can hardly expect Russian fears to be lulled by the increasingly open and armed quality of our unofficial but more and more obvious alliance with Britain.

War may not be inevitable, but peace can be made impossible. Certainly the doctrine seems to have been adopted that anything less than "toughness" is appeasement. Our diplomacy with Russia has already become a brittle business of ultimatums, endless bureaucratic protests, stiff backs in morning coats and frigid formality in striped pants. Nothing is so obvious as that the warm, human, smiling, face-to-face dealings Roosevelt made famous and effective have disappeared. Our international relations have dropped from the level of greatness to the level of punctilious and unimaginative but dully dangerous clerks.

—*Press Association, Inc.*

"Elliott saw as his father's intimate companion most of the great conferences [and] has a unique right to speak against a policy, pushed in his father's name, the only trend of which seems to be . . . toward prewar alliance and war."

HARRY TRUMAN is a man of undoubted good will. He was—and I believe is—eager to fulfill the hopes Roosevelt delivered to him. But Mr. Truman is not Roosevelt. He is not Wilson fighting for his own cause. He does not so much lack as he fails to understand the tough country courage which made Andrew Johnson ready to go down the hard road of repudiation for Lincoln's great purposes. He certainly should know, however, that not all those under him who have assumed the direction of America's foreign policy were devoted to either Roosevelt or his aims.

And Harry Truman is in a strange position. He himself has played no personal role in the high politics of peace since Potsdam. But his role becomes more and more ironic. He might be politically victorious in America as Roosevelt's successor and as leader of the party to which Roosevelt gave new character and meaning, permitting himself to be made the captain of the very forces which Roosevelt would have despised. There have been plenty of politicians and others to show him that way—and very plausibly, very persuasively. But he might—it may still not be too late—keep America where Roosevelt placed it high in a hoping world's regard as a power independent of both imperialism and communism.

I am not sure that the last would be the best "politics." Reaction may seem now the better horse to ride to election as it was in 1920. Perhaps the coalition which Roosevelt led in America disappeared with Roosevelt and the only thing that can hold a Democratic Party together now is the cohesive force of prejudices and fears. The politicians will have to decide that. But in deciding I think they decide, as definitely as any "small group of willful men" ever did before, not only party policy but America's part in the second chance for security. I know Roosevelt would have his Dutch up in Heaven over any decision which undertook to keep him as party patron above any policy of fear.

Elliott Roosevelt's protest is a service not only to his father but to America. It not only vividly lights the past but it throws a brilliant illumination also upon the operations of any men, high or low, on aircraft carriers or in government offices who are trying to use Franklin Roosevelt's name to destroy Franklin Roosevelt's purposes for world unity in world security. It is too early yet to know the final pattern we are making: power alliances or collective security, early war or long peace. It is not too early to say that such a *de facto* alliance with Britain in the old power politics of imperialism as we have today is a full-faced and bald-faced rejection of the free American position for peace Roosevelt maintained. It is not too early to say, as Elliott Roosevelt has with filial and informed vigor said, that in fateful aspects Roosevelt in death and silence has been rejected first by some of those who affect to speak most loudly in world affairs as his successors and his friends.

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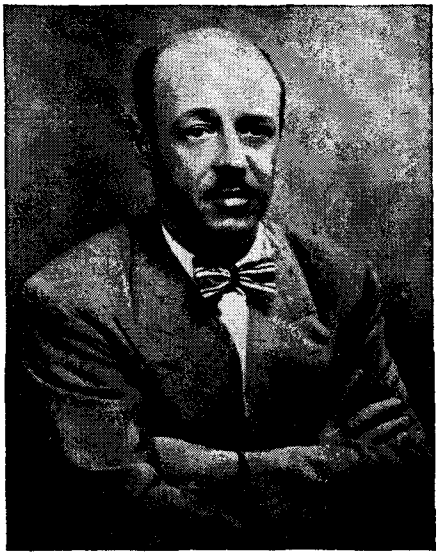
The Seed of Evil

THE FALL OF VALOR. By Charles Jackson. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc. 1946. 310 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH



Charles Jackson's "writing technique 'transmutes medical case history into art'."

LACKING the suspense and the continued excitement of "The Lost Weekend," Charles Jackson's second novel is a finer and a more skilful work than the first. From the hectic blow-by-blow recital of an alcoholic's fight to drink and to continue to live he has now changed his pace to match the slow growth of an evil seed which had fallen into the arid heart of an honest man, for the theme itself, the infatuation of a middle-aged professor for a young captain of the Marines, demanded a different technique. Both novels are psychological studies, since the first questioned why a young man should want to drink himself to death and "The Fall of Valor" asks why Professor John Grandin, on the high-road to academic success, happily married for ten years, and with two children, should suddenly imperil his future, his marriage, his happiness, ruin everything, for a passion alien to him in his past. Again the reader is involved in a psychological mystery and a writing technique "which transmutes," to quote Philip Wylie, "medical case history into art." Mr. Jackson found, not one reason, but a thousand for Don Birnam's drinking; he finds only one for Professor Grandin's appalling fall from grace—somewhere in him a fatal and undiscovered flaw in his nature, so that in Melville's words the reader "bleeds with keenest anguish at the undraped spectacle of a valor-ruined man."

In a novel destined for popular success, few have ever treated the problem of male homosexual behavior except by indirection, none so honestly as in this book. It is an uncomfortable and an ugly theme even when it is treated coldly as a psychiatric and not as an emotional problem. Mr. Jackson needs no excuse for using it, for homosexuality is world-wide if not as universal as alcoholism, and the results to the individual and to the normal people with whom he associates may be even more disastrous.

John Grandin was not a homosexual when he met the handsome Marine captain and his beautiful, if silly, bride on the boat to Nantucket. But he was deeply disturbed in mind and heart. In his effort to achieve success as an English teacher in a New York university and to finish his book, "The Tragic Ideal," which had at last been accepted, he had for a long time forgotten his wife's natural demands, had neglected his "duties" as a husband. He knew that he still loved her, but an inescapable barrier had grown between these two sensitive but loving people simply because the word "demand" on her part and "duty" on his lay at the back of their minds, so that his wife said to herself sickeningly day after day, "Will he come to me tonight?" and he thought in his study at midnight, "Must I interrupt my task to satisfy her wish?"

Like many wives, Ethel Grandin had left New York for the summer with her children. She left a man absorbed in his work and in a growing preoccupation with the dilemma of the countless young men risking their lives in the war. He had even cut out from a newspaper and had hidden under his blotter, where his wife had found it, a photograph of an exhausted youth lying asleep in a trench. The trip to Nantucket where he was to join his wife was in the minds of both of them a second honeymoon in which they would renew their old relations and reestablish their marriage. Nantucket had been selected because they knew no one there; there would be a full moon and the amorous intimacy of a hotel bedroom pervaded by the sound and the scent of the sea.

That first night in Sconset was a bad omen. The woman's repressed bitterness broke out in brutal and even vulgar words. The professor slept at last in one of the twin beds, and his wife rose early and left him without a word. This common matrimonial quarrel might have led to a reconciliation if John Grandin had not become absorbed in the youth in the uniform of a captain of the Marines. He was everything that a somewhat stupid soldier should be—strong, handsome, modest, and determined to return to service when his wounds were completely healed. Grandin felt that he would not return alive a second time and saw in him the dilemma and the tragedy of all youth in the year 1943. Furthermore, the captain attached himself almost worshipfully to the professor, who was perhaps the second really intelligent man he had ever known. The first had been another teacher in college who had made a certain gesture toward him.

So far all of this is plain to the reader and understandable, for until half way through the novel Grandin does not know, nor does the reader, what concealed tides are pulling him to disaster. Then comes the climax, the moment when, alone on the beach, he realizes that this is not merely an infatuation with the concept of doomed youth, but actual physical love. Finally it became clear to his wife, and there is a horrible scene between them in which he tries to convince her that it meant no more than any other summer infatuation into which a man sorely tried and starved of sex might fall. She calls him by an ugly word, "pervert," and leaves him as would almost any other woman.

And now comes the moment of real weakness to which Mr. Jackson refers in his quotation from Macbeth, ". . . being unprepar'd, our will became the servant of defect." He should have fled immediately as if from the devil himself, but he remains chained and besotted by the bright danger and the morbid thought. When he finally runs away, he leaves a note to the unknowing, but, one suspects, tensely aware captain that finally brings about his ruin. The Marine meets him alone in New York, the uncontrollable words are spoken, the fatal embracing gesture is made, the soldier's wrath and his blow follow instantaneously.

This is a book that cries for a second reading. If at first it is consumed hastily, it seems to move too ponderously, in alternating scenes between Grandin and his wife, as their fate slowly approaches its consummation. The revelation seems long delayed, as it would in a mystery novel if there were intimations of murder, but no corpse until the two hundred and twenty-ninth page. Then there is immediate rebellion in the reader's mind. Could a normal man possibly feel like this about another man if he had had no hint of it from his past, if he had loved one woman single-heartedly for a decade? The answer that comes to the ordinary man is,

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"No, this is impossible," as it would if he were asked if he could strike a cripple or cut his mother's throat. Then, if you are like this reader, you will go back through the novel to find traces in the man of this malady. You cannot find them, except for the newspaper clipping of the tired soldier, which is no evidence at all. You have to take Mr. Jackson's word for it that it can happen and that it did happen to his professor, and so that it might to any other normal man.

The novelist is under no compulsion, artistic or otherwise, to tell the truth; he has only to make it appear to be the truth. Few writers have ever approached a more difficult task, since the idea itself is shocking, even revolting, and it appears to be against common sense and the rules of psychiatry. Every reader, man or woman, will have to make up his or her mind from the evidence submitted from Mr. Jackson's powerful and lucid prose. This is the problem that will and should be debated hotly by the readers of "The Fall of Valor." The people who will feel that the subject itself is not suitable deserve little consideration. Everyone knows that homosexuality exists. It is time that a novel of this sort should bring it to the surface. It is in a strange way a milestone in our literary progress, and we can only hope that few writers less gifted than Mr. Jackson will dare to approach it.

Thirteen Up, One to Play

ESCAPE IN PASSION. By Jules Romains. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1946. 558 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THE long novel that Jules Romains began to write in 1931 has now reached its thirteenth and penultimate volume in the American edition, and the year 1933 in the history of its characters. In that year Hitler had recently come to power, but his direction was already plain to seeing eyes, while Mussolini had ruled for more than a decade. In Italy and Germany and Russia it was an era of strong men and strong-arm tactics, but in France it was a time of bickering, weakness, corruption, and social conflicts. The traditional guardian of European civilization was moving towards the abyss.

Within this historical frame, M. Romains concentrates chiefly upon the two central characters whose careers we have followed now for so many years of our own, and through so many years of theirs: Pierre Jallez and Jean Jerphanion. But the time and space he gives them still leave him room to write Frédéric Haverkamp's final and spectacular chapter, and to pay passing attention to a number of minor figures. Jallez's activities are largely in the sphere of Venus, Jerphanion's in that of politics; while Haverkamp is a man divided between love and the highest of international high finance, but not so divided or beset by difficulties that he cannot plan a way out of his troubles. Jallez, who is known to us as an author of increasing distinction and fame, now appears in the part of a calculating seducer, and, later, that of a romantic lover. Jerphanion, who has sat in the Chamber of Deputies and held minor ministerial offices, now finds himself, briefly, Minister for Foreign Affairs, at a time when a Four-Power Pact is in process of negotiation. And Haverkamp, having become one of the world's richest men, in accordance with a pattern that reminds us of Lowenstein and Kreuger, while smelling also of Stavisky, comes at last to the end of his very complicated financial rope.

M. Romains shows us a France that is as fearful of its supposed friends as of its probable enemies, a country torn by internal political strife and harassed by a Fifth Column which recognizes a higher allegiance than that of mere patriotism. At one extreme are the members of communist cells: at the other extreme the members of Colonel de la Rocque's Croix-de-Feu.

Everywhere there are portents. Haverkamp's crash is not only a forerunner, but a symbol of the greater crash that is to come. When Jerphanion takes over the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, he finds himself almost immediately in an impossible position. Jallez may point out to him the damage that is being done French prestige in other countries by the "political St. Vitus dance" of the French government; but Jerphanion is firm. If he is to be true to himself and to France, he must resign. "Suppose I stay in office, at the cost of certain necessary concessions. The only result of that will be to do the country irreparable harm by presenting to the public a false picture of unity that will merely disguise the fact that the ministers are a body of mortally sick men." In such a historical setting against such a background, one cannot help feeling that too much space is given to detailed accounts of Jallez's casual amours. It is all very entertaining, no doubt, to follow him in and out of bedrooms and other meeting-places, to read of his affair with the masochistic Baroness, of his protracted orgy with Erna, of the gracious Madeleine, the uncomplicated Gertrude.

—From "All Men Have Loved Thee."

In 1933 [France] "the traditional guardian of European civilization was moving towards the abyss."

M. Romains writes as knowingly, and surely as entertainingly, of sex as he does of any subject. But there are scores of novelists who can match him in the field of plain and fancy fornication, whereas in the encompassing field of social history, with all its ramifications, he has few rivals. He could have given us a broader and deeper view of France in 1933, of the emotional and intellectual currents running through all classes, had he spent less time with Jallez's journal. He has done well what he chose to do, but he has left undone much that he might have done—and all for the sake of a Gallic holiday.

Attempts have been made through the years to sum up, at several stages, the value of this long novel. Now we are near the end; the evidence will soon be complete. We shall soon be able to view and judge "Men of Good Will" as a whole, measure its proportions, and decide how far intentions have been realized in execution. We shall test it for weight and probe it for depth, and try to determine whether or not forces have been dissipated that might better have been concentrated. Meanwhile, we know that it is one of the most ambitious enterprises that have been undertaken in fiction. We know, too, whatever the value of his story—whether it proves finally to be an enduring work of literary art, or a pretentious but exciting serial of only temporary interest—that Jules Romains is a born and practised story-teller, acutely intelligent, wealthy in material, and possessed of remarkable fluency.

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Off an Illustrator's Chest

ROSES AND BUCKSHOT. An Autobiography. By James Montgomery Flagg. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1946. 224 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THIS is a chesty, exasperating book; and you keep on reading it. It is frankly written by a man widely known as an illustrator. It is full of honest-to-God opinions, not to speak of tirades; and I hope I shall be as honest as the author in reviewing it.

James Montgomery Flagg, in his anecdotage, has entertaining stories to tell. He seems to have taken the old advice, "Why don't you write as you talk?"; and to read his book is like hearing a man gabbing who has known a great many people, traveled a bit, heard a lot of amusing things, mixed in many jamborees, wanted to be a great artist, loved beautiful women, hated violently quite a lot of other things, and who can make it all interesting.

To get this off *my* chest, right at the beginning, I hate the fitful intolerance that suddenly flares up in these pages, chiefly against what is known as "modern art." Mr. Flagg is one—can there be many more?—who won't even allow that Renoir, Cezanne, Van Gogh, or even Manet could paint! That is going back as far as the French Impressionists, and throwing out so many men of genius that the whole thing becomes absurd. Even Dali, whose nightmares I can take or leave alone, has gifts of draughtsmanship and composition that are amazing. I could wish that an illustrator, who at other times can be sane and sage, who can be sensitive to human failings, and concerning some people—except when he suddenly roars that there are practically no good Germans and that all Japs should be destroyed—I could wish that he knew more about art. In my opinion he doesn't know much.

This man could draw at the age of three or four. Amusingly he says, in his caption for "Portrait of my father" made at that time, "Picasso studied under me then." His portrait of his grandmother drawn when Flagg was fourteen is better than a lot of his later work. Flagg as a humorist, in the old *Life;* in his little books of limericks and such; in the old *American Magazine* (for which he at one time did a monthly feature) added to my enjoyment of existence. Flagg as an illustrator I always, inevitably somehow (as I was a *Life* subscriber when a schoolboy, and followed the work of Charles Dana Gibson almost from the beginning) compared to Gibson; and, compared to Gibson, he was nowhere. I have never seen any Flagg paintings, save war posters, but to judge by several reproductions in this book, he is not very good at portraits. It is not, however, as a book on art that "Roses and Buckshot" need be judged.

It is a book about the life of a popular illustrator who really, on the whole, seems to have had a lot of fun. One happy married chapter, and one intense love affair with a tragic ending. But that is a lucky allotment for most men. An early friend of his was a real artist, Walter Appleton Clark. He had another coruscating friend in Jack Barrymore. To judge by her photograph in this book, he has a beautiful daughter. The first time he met Greta Garbo she was much impressed with him. Now he has written a funny, violent volume which I think many people will be reading. He says some astute things in it, and some ridiculous ones.

Being an old Centurion, I was naturally interested when the author in his youth escaped from Brooklyn to Union Square and knew Tudor Jenks on *St. Nicholas* (before my time) and Oliver Herford and Reginald Birch (whom I met later) and admired, entirely rightly, such excellent illustrators as Abbey, Pyle, Frost, and Kemble. And as for children's books, his taste is impeccable. Except that it wasn't Guy Wetmore Carryl who wrote "Davy and the Goblin," but Charles E. Carryl, his father (who also wrote an even greater children's classic, "The Admiral's Caravan"). Flagg is right that Shepard is *the* interpreter of "The Wind in the Willows," but I cannot agree that A. B. Frost is the only artist for "Nights with Uncle Remus." The early F. S. Church drawings are inextricably bound up in my memories of childhood with the original stories. And one recalls that series of other books by Joel Chandler Harris which Oliver Herford so inimitably illustrated, beginning with "The Story of Aaron." Don Stewart, by the way, may well be proud of the praise Flagg gives to his "The Haddocks." The illustrator is a well-read man. At twelve he had devoured all of Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, Reade, Bulwer-Lytton, Jane Austen, and Charles Lever—a feat equalled to my own knowledge only by my own father, certainly not by me.

One of my favorite spots in the book is the part about Mark Twain, including Mark's famous comment on Adelina Patti; which reminds me that I will always be wondering who the girl *au naturel* is in Flagg's painting of his own studio, facing page 45? One of the best chapters is "Illustrating at Full Speed." And then there is the part about Krishnamurti, who told Flagg: "Stop looking for *differences* in races, look for what you have in common with them." Good advice! Flagg's admiration for Krishnamurti is all to his credit.

Then there is the story of Ilse; real, moving, and memorable.

The general tone of this book a Britisher would call "breezy"; sometimes it unexpectedly blows a gale. You can skip the gripes, though. Don't ask more of it than it is. Take it as entertainment.

James Montgomery Flagg has written "a chesty, exasperating book . . . full of honest-to-God opinions, not to speak of tirades."

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: NO. 172

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 172 *will be found in the next issue.*

UX YWXYSW IX GX TEVL

LHJT HG FLXGW CLX AX

HPXEF IXMUA AXXI.—

THUIWSS VJWMALFXU.—

SMZW, 1904.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 171

The living need charity more than the dead.—

GEORGE ARNOLD

—The Jolly Old Pedagogue.

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Report on the Critics

W. L. WHITE

I SHOULD know something about book-smearing, for "Report on the Russians" spent six months on the best-seller list only last year. It had a tempestuous course. It was first attacked by David Zaslavsky in *Pravda* and by the local communist press while it was being condensed in *The Reader's Digest.* Shortly before the review copies were out, Mr. Bennett Cerf predicted in *The Saturday Review* that it would be "the worst book of the year." It was then covered for *The Saturday Review* by a symposium of five writers. Three of these reviews were amplifications of the line laid down by Comrade Zaslavsky and Mr. Cerf.

The other two reviewers, Mr. Louis Fischer and Mr. William Henry Chamberlin, either of whom has spent more time in Soviet Russia than the other three laid end to end, not only liked the book but, even in the face of a well-organized critical stampede, dared to say so in print, for which I was and still am sincerely grateful.

The Saturday Review's editors very generously offered me space for a reply. I decided that it was perhaps not the exact moment for an author to sing his own praises, but begged instead to reserve space later, which, through their courtesy, this article now occupies.

I had a reason for this. I had brought out the book only following prayerful cogitation, and after having rejected some advice which I knew was sound. This was to the effect that while my picture of Russia was probably accurate, nevertheless New York literary circles had been doped up with unusual amounts of wartime lovie-dovie on the subject of "Soviet Democracy"; it would therefore be prudent to delay publication six months, giving news events time to catch up with my book.

I rejected this advice because my profession is not, or rather it should not be, merely a branch of the entertainment industry. It is all right if the current B picture at the neighborhood movie tells the audience what they want to hear at just the time they want to hear it. A reporter, however, must on occasion warn his readers of dangers ahead, even when they do not want to see them.

I have never agreed with the notion, widespread in literary circles, that it is, in time of war, the patriotic duty of a writer to tell the public soothing lies, or to withhold important but disagreeable facts, although I concede that he will temporarily be more popular if he prudently complies with this.

Several weeks before the book was published, the National Council for American-Soviet Friendship cabled the Anglo-American correspondents' association in Moscow, asking them as a body to join in a petition denouncing my book. What then happened in Moscow is told best by George Moorad in his excellent forthcoming book, "Behind the Iron Curtain." But, briefly, the correspondents held a meeting and voted down the request—an action which, considering their situation (they knew the Soviet foreign office had read the cable), took real courage. However, of the eighteen correspondents present at the Moscow meeting, seven cabled their willingness to sign a denunciation of a book they had not read.

By writing, telephoning, and cabling all over the world to each of the many scores of correspondents who at some time had been in Moscow since the war began, the Soviet Friendship Council was able to collect nine more names and released the list as sixteen American Moscow correspondents who denounced the book. Of the sixteen, several were British, Canadians, or New Zealanders. Others were journalistic curiosities who wrote sporadically for obscure communist or fellow traveler publications and could be called war correspondents only by stretching the term considerably. However, there were on the list several well-known and reputable names.

—*Disraeli.*

W. L. White: "A correspondent is supposed to keep the public informed, not just entertained."

My book came out in March of last year. It was immediately followed by a bevy of reporters' books on Russia, all ballyhooed either by their publishers, the National Council for American-Soviet Friendship, the *Daily Worker,* or the authors themselves as "answers" to the darkly prejudiced picture painted by "the White book."

From this pile of last year's reporters' books on Russia, I take one (not quite at random) to examine in the hard light of 1946.

Remember that a correspondent is supposed to keep the public informed, not just entertained.

Remember that the picture he presents is presumed to have some relation to the facts, as the public subsequently learns them after the war, with its taboos and censorship, is over.

Remember that if, in Act I, Russia is depicted in loving detail as combining the tender virtues of Elsie Dinsmore, Little Eva, Little Nell, and the Little Women, she is hardly supposed to end up, at the final curtain, growling nastily and with her white, blood-smeared fangs firmly fixed in the seat of Our Hero's pants.

REMEMBERING these simple rules of common honesty—and I submit that a purchaser who hopefully pays $2.50 for a book is entitled to at least this much—let us turn to the volume at hand.

Its writer, of course, follows the well-beaten path of these wartime Russia-worshippers — a sojourn in Moscow, then a trip over the Urals.

One finds the usual slurs at American bravery in comparison with that of the Red Army: he finds, on the streets of Moscow, "far fewer soldiers than in either Washington or New York. The Russians have a theory that the place for a man in uniform is at the front."

The more astute Soviet apologists admit Russia's low standard of living, but insist that the shabbiness of her people is due to the war effort.

This genius, however, seems to have dug up a few Russians who have not been informed of the war. They come strolling into his pages fresh out of Hart, Schaffner and Marx or Hattie Carnegie's fitting room. As early as page 23 we meet "an attractive brunette in a simply cut dress of gleaming white satin," and on the next, men whose "clothes are well cut, of good material, clean and pressed." Is it possible that these tailor's dummies fought a war? What became of the shabby Soviet army which our G.I.'s met near Leipzig?

He is always pretending amazement when some slander which has lodged in his mind (possibly from "the White book") is exploded by the

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friendly Soviet reality. He "had expected to find the church deserted, except for a few ragged, superstitious old women. But these people . . . were decently dressed. Clearly they, or their husbands, held positions of some consequence . . . yet they had no fear of jeopardizing this by attending church."

One constantly finds "clean, bright-eyed Soviet school children" or "a pretty, well-dressed woman," or girls who are "very pretty," among these "friendly, hard-working people." And if there may be some in rags he stubbornly insists that even Soviet rags "are never quite that. They are always clean and neatly mended," and worn by Russians who are "gentle and friendly and obviously never had been warned against foreigners."

BUT what of the cities in this sartorial paradise? Even in the backwoods country beyond the Urals, he finds them "beautifuly laid out and well paved." He is either taken to a *datcha* which "gleams new and white against green trees," with rooms which are "large, clean and luxurious," or else to a "clean modern hotel." In each town he finds "a beautiful new theatre, with some fine buildings around it." Or else he finds the theatre "new, attractive and crowded." Even a railway station is "an impressive, modern building. Its architecture is dramatic."

Does this worshipper see everything here through the eyes of a Florida real estate prospectus? No: Russia is marvelous only if it is Bolshevik.

The new Palace of the Soviets near Leningrad may be "a tall impressive building" and its architecture "pleasantly simple," but the ancient cathedral there is "as over-decorated as a lace valentine, but gloomy." At Sverdlovsk he starts to admire the marble opera house, but finding it was built under the Czars, decides that it is "a little too ornate." At Leningrad he strolls through a museum full of statuary, a relic of ancient times. The statues are in the Italian style, the Bolsheviks value them enough to preserve them, but because they are not Bolshevik-carved, he inevitably finds the whole "as dead as the autocracy that inspired it."

By contrast Soviet ballet in Moscow is "beautiful beyond anything I have ever seen on any stage in any country," there being presumably no nasty autocracy to deaden it, and even in a tank town like Sverdlovsk, the ballet is still "very good." In the movies these marvelous Bolsheviks achieve even greater miracles, for at one of these "excellent Russian pictures" one does not "need the language to understand and be moved by it"! (The exclamation point is my own.)

Turning from the arts to more practical matters, one finds the same circus poster superlatives. Many billions of dollars' worth of American industrial products were sent to Russia on the theory that the Soviet Union was industrially a somewhat backward country, unable to support its own war effort. This must be wrong, for, going from plant to plant, our fellow-traveler art critic now becomes an industrial expert who pronounces an electro-chemical works "an impressive plant, orderly, clean and apparently efficiently run. All of this complicated equipment was made in the Soviet Union." He also pontificates that an airplane plant "is in

good shape. We estimate that they are turning out at least as many planes as a similar number of workers would produce in America." In another plane plant the work of Soviet designers is, of course, "excellent" and the product itself is always "a good, precision made job." An optical plant is "clean, well-lit and apparently well run, for no one is idle at the benches," a cotton mill "clean, orderly, bright and seemed well-managed."

So it interminably goes. As for our help, while, of course, Russia's grateful leaders "do not underestimate the value of American aid," nevertheless it can't have amounted to much for, after inspecting Russian plants beyond the Urals, the heart of Russia's war effort, he insists that "we have seen little American machinery —indeed few foreign machines of any kind." If these marvelous Russians didn't need our help, for which their leaders were so grateful, then what became of it?

And as for Russian agriculture? More Soviet miracles. It is "uniformly good . . . at least as good as our best," and this is climaxed by a visit to—guess what? Well, a mink farm. Now if our fellow-traveler had stumbled into such a phenomenon in wartime England, we would get, in the highest traditions of Ralph Ingersoll, an ear-splitting load of anguished miaows, aggrieved whinneys, and heart-broken moos, against the cunning British for wheedling lend-lease out of us while quietly diverting their own wartime manpower into producing a silly, bourgeois luxury, with an eye to their post-war markets, when ragged Russians were dying at Stalingrad.

But this is Mother Russia. These are not fascist minks, nor imperialist minks, nor capitalist minks, nor kuomintang minks, nor even reactionary minks — but Soviet minks. Therefore they and their keepers must be lavished with love, and so he finds the place "orderly and clean, and the sturdy farmers seem to know their business thoroughly."

And in conclusion what or who is the guiding genius, the head architect and chauffeur of this omnibus of superlative miracles? It is, of course, Stalin who is "a great man," who has "guided Russia with an instinctive wisdom" and beneath him a hierarchy of Marxist archangels, seraphim, and cherubim, descending into the Communist Party which wants "only intense workers who will subject themselves to a discipline as rigid as that of any army," which "does not want 'careerists'," and where "any signs of 'personal ambition' are punished," so that any class distinctions in this Utopia are "based on achievement and hard work."

And if this perfection of totalitarian unity has been achieved at the price of occasional mass shootings, what of it? Soviet policy, we are told, "cannot be deflected by personal tragedy, since its objectives are the building of a strong, loyal state." Hitler's public relations experts used almost the same fancy language.

YOU feel I have handled this author a little rudely? Perhaps. Everything favorable which he said about his pilgrimage is true, and would be justified in a wartime book on Russia, provided that he balanced his superlatives with criticism.

I will even argue that his book was, for its time, unique, in that its praise of Soviet Russia, which I have quoted only in part, was balanced by criticism which was often adequate.

If it was not adequate, no book reviewer in 1945 complained of any lack. And if I, in my quotations, have deliberately misrepresented this book, that is my right, for, after all, I wrote it.

And if my selected quotations above do not give an honest picture of that

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book, neither did the quotes and comments of those reviewers who, only a year ago, were screaming with shrill, eunuchoid fury that here was a highly prejudiced hymn of hate written only to stir up distrust of a noble ally.

Concerning the sixteen correspondents who joined this clamor, I have a little story. Once upon a time, in an ancient kingdom beyond the seas, there was a busy little valley whose people had been making plans for a community picnic on the Fourth of July, complete with fried chicken, pink lemonade, white kid shoes, and, in the evening, platform dancing by the light of paper lanterns.

The professional Weather Prophets Guild of that valley had been surveying the skies constantly from the top of a high mountain and were unanimous in their predictions that July 4 would be "continued fair, with moderate temperature."

But on the morning of the third, a very humble amateur, not a member of the Weather Prophets Guild, ventured to climb the mountain for the first time, took a few observations, and returned to announce, in his piping treble, that the barometer seemed to be falling and he thought he saw the outlines of a distant thunderhead.

Whereupon everybody fell upon him. They called him unpatriotic because his observations were an implied slander on the Fourth of July.

They charged that he was maliciously trying to start a panic which would disrupt preparations for the picnic.

They said he had always been anti-picnic, and that even before he climbed the hill he had made up his mind what his report would be.

They said he was secretly in the pay of the umbrella and raincoat trust, a man with soul so dead that he could not appreciate the subtle beauties of brick ice cream or paper lanterns.

The valley's most augustly authoritative journal was, of course, its *Times*, which finally passed judgment that the wretched little man, while he was probably not in favor of rains, and fired no shots for thunderstorms, yet in his Report he certainly rolled up ammunition for picnic-haters and fascism.

But nobody got quite so furious as the Professionals in the Weather Prophets Guild. For days they had been busy (not unprofitably, too) on the radio, writing for magazines, and also lecturing, explaining that fair weather prediction upon which they had all agreed, praising one another's individual and collective wisdom and patriotism.

(*Continued on page* 38)

When a Home Was a Home

MY BOYHOOD IN A PARSONAGE. By Thomas W. Lamont. New York: Harper & Bros. 1946. 203 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN CORBIN

THE inspirational source of Mr. Lamont's little book on his boyhood in a Methodist parsonage is a nostalgic, yet an always humorous and often beautiful memory of horse-and-buggy living in the final decades of the nineteenth century. His father, whose salary was some $1,200 (reduced to $1,080 by scrupulously giving the Lord's tithe to the less opulent), put three children through preparatory school and college; and, though the fumes of hellfire and brimstone still hovered about church and parish, he managed to infuse into his household a spirit of kindly cheer which wife and children abetted with quirks of fancy mundane to the point of satire.

One family joke was at the expense of little Tommy. Having been given a nickel to spend, he squeezed it so close as to cause remonstrance. He replied with precocious financial sagacity, explaining that when you break a fi'-cen's the rest is gone before you know it. If his unco-Methodist Aunt Jane had been alive, she would have been horrified. She once wrote an essay, "The Beginning of Evil," which showed that apparently trifling lapses from rectitude "are usually the first stage to a man's progress to the most desperate villainies." And she put the idea to poetry:

> So men from little sins to great proceed.
> Guilt grows on guilt and crimes do crimes succeed.

She died before Tommy was born, and no one else had the sobriety to perceive that his progress, as Hogarth would say, was to be that of an International Banker.

Several chapters have already appeared in *The Saturday Review of Literature* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, but they gain greatly by their present setting with its more fully rounded perspective. In the age before motor car and movies, home was the all-inclusive center of living, not a mere point of departure for movie houses, country clubs, and cocktail parties. And leisure at home meant, if it meant anything, steady if not solid reading—the cheapest as it is the most replenishing of pastimes. One shrinks at the thought of what the youth of today would feel at being reduced to Dickens and Thackeray, Scott and Cooper, Jules Verne and Victor Hugo, even Mayne Reid and Horatio Alger.

No small part of the poetic charm which Mr. Lamont casts about his Victorian boyhood springs from memories of the landscape that surrounded his itinerant father's parishes—Claverack, Coxsackie, Saugerties, and Rondout—with the loveliness of the upper Hudson and its tributaries in the foreground and the majestic Catskills against the sunset. But I venture to say that he himself never thought of that when his nose was buried in those books.

The chapters on his life at Exeter and Harvard are new and tell the thoroughly American story of how he eked out the family resources with newspaper and other work. One meets the great teachers of the time, some of whom are not now so great, and others, such as William James and George Santayana, much greater. His capacity for many and varied friendships, and his staunch loyalty in them, is perhaps too modestly veiled. At both Exeter and Harvard, to mention one instance, he was as own brother to Jeremiah Smith, Jr., and he later used his great influence with the League of Nations to have him appointed financial administrator for bankrupt Hungary. The story of Jerry's gnomelike wisdom, his dry and crackling Yankee humor, and his inflexible but never doctrinary honesty, deserves a permanent record. The sum-total of his accomplishment is indicated in the fact that he added, at least for a time, a word to the Hungarian tongue, perhaps also an idea. When a bright new scheme was proposed, quite nakedly bereft of the usual flim-flam of bargaining, the doubtful would ask, "Come now, is this absolutely *Jerry*?"

Perhaps this, with other Jerryisms, is reserved for later chapters of an autobiography which Aunt Jane and Hogarth would regard as the Progress of an International Banker.

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Housing Present and Future

HOUSING AND CITIZENSHIP. By George Herbert Gray. New York: Reinhold Publishing Corp. 1946. 240 *pp.* $7.50.

Reviewed by ELY JACQUES KAHN

BEFORE discussing this book, it is pertinent to question just how many readers of a journal devoted to literature trouble themselves to bother about reviews of books about housing, to say nothing about the books themselves. The fact that people actually live in houses, that their lives are vitally concerned with the physical environment in which they work, play, or raise their families seems to escape them. At any rate, to judge by the best-seller index, books on housing do not startle the average book-buyer into demanding large editions.

Strong voices have been raised time and again to remind the public that their carelessness towards their own lands and the disfigurations that they have permitted in the guise of improvements are tragic commentaries on our standards of civilization. Frank Lloyd Wright in "Democracy Builds" blasted at the complacency of people who produced the absurdities of our towns and cities. Wright hates the cities and suggested radical solutions. Whether the reader likes Wright or not is beside the point. His vision and imagination command respect, yet he is just another voice repeating what many, since John Ruskin, have dinned into our ears. The sudden development of the industrial age, factories, railroads, automobiles, large cities, crammed into a short period of history a completely undigested mass of building that gave little consideration to the individual and certainly very little to the areas in which he could enjoy his life.

The difficulty with so many of the books on housing is that they must, perforce, go into detail, for otherwise they would merely repeat the platitudes that something is wrong and there must be a remedy. As Gray notes in the introduction to his book, the problem is so large that solutions loom beyond the scope of the individual.

Community planning must develop and if we are eventually to see replanning of our cities in which sensible attention is given to proper relationships of housing, industry, traffic, and other features of communal living, the group power of the community must be called upon. We have seen the fallacies that emerge from individual and unrestrained growths where the main consideration in building is a good return on an investment.

Major Gray's book deals with low-priced housing—his concern is with the shelter of people in the mass, rather than the house for the individual. The book is thorough, well documented, excellently illustrated, and serves one purpose that has been lacking in recent volumes in that it covers developments in England, France, Holland, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, and Germany as well as in America.

The average reader, on glancing at the book, will assume that he cannot possibly be interested in technical detail and pass it by. This particular reader, nevertheless, is exactly the person who represents the laissez-faire attitude of the public. He must realize that the responsibility for the shocking condition of our slums is as pertinent to him as any other issue on which he will take a strong position.

If delinquency, statistics on disease, birth rate, and similar social phenomena interest him, he will discover quite promptly how deeply related all of them are to proper shelter. He may find in Major Gray's volume the interesting facts of cooperative housing, particularly in Sweden. He will find how in many countries, Germany for example, land on the perimeter of the cities was owned by the municipalities, so that excessive costs for controlling the sites did not in any way hamper the work under consideration.

It is interesting to chart the volume of actual accomplishments per capita in England as against America, in spite of devastating wars and difficult labor problems. Those who are curious as to standards of living will find strange comparison between what we call minimum requirements and those of various other lands.

We assume, probably without any question, that houses must be heated, have hot water, bath rooms, and, in the most carefully analyzed projects, have conveniences which we take for granted. Naturally, these so called luxuries cost money and are reflected in the higher cost per dwelling unit. In various countries, the desire for areas where one can have one's own garden and enjoy the satisfaction of raising vegetables or flowers is so strong that provision for such space is automatic.

Here is another work that begs the citizen to ponder as to what has happened over the centuries where haphazard housing has been vicious in its effect on people all over the globe. We are gradually coming to realize that philanthropy, compassion, regret, and possibly shame will not clear the mess that has covered our cities with cancer spots.

If the reader will take the trouble to read Major Gray's book—it is a solid package of information—he will be grateful for an introduction to a subject that concerns him more vitally than he realizes.

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Jobs and Peace, Peace and Jobs

FOR THIS WE FOUGHT. By Stuart Chase. New York: Twentieth Century Fund. 1946. 123 *pp.* $1.

Reviewed by MERLE MILLER

STUART CHASE has written an annoying book. He will not be applauded by economists because he has dared to state his convictions and present his facts in simple, readable English. He will be condemned by the orthodox of both political extremes because he happens to think that neither Adam Smith nor Karl Marx has anything particularly significant to say about our contemporary problems. Mr. Chase has charted a lonely course; in these days of fanatic extremists he will find it difficult to convince anyone of his thesis, except, possibly, the people of the United States.

Chase has written dozens of lucid probings into the economic problems that face us; yet he is not a very original thinker. What he writes can almost always be found in the dusty studies of the more profound minds whose books are yawned through by bored undergraduates or droned out by weary professors—and promptly forgotten. Primarily, he is a popularizer, and, certain academicians to the contrary, there is nothing shameful about that.

In his latest study Mr. Chase takes a look at postwar America. Although his book was, apparently, completed in April of this year, almost all of his worst fears have already taken place. Many of the economic safeguards of the OPA have already disappeared. Veterans are still without houses, and nobody seems very anxious or able to do much about it. The problems posed by the creation of the atomic bomb have been largely left unsolved. Our Congressmen, before they adjourned, seemed determined to hurry as rapidly as possible back to the safe, comfortable, and unobtainable days of Calvin Coolidge. And meantime, as Mr. Chase feared, this country's leaders seem determined to repeat the crash of 1929 and the dreary and dangerous years that followed.

To date, there has been no single leader who has dared answer the question raised by a sergeant in the 341st Engineers. "It don't make a bit of sense," said the sergeant. "Our outfit helped to build the Alcan Highway. We just got bulldozers and steam shovels and sailed into the job. Why not call on the 341st and have us build a few houses? We'd have a place to live in a few weeks." Mr. Chase believes the sergeant's question can and must be answered and that it applies to far broader fields than housing. In a remarkably encouraging chapter called "The Five-Year Miracle," he points to the unbelievable achievement of the United States during the war years: the mobilization of a slugging fighting force, the camps built, the factories equipped, the unexpected workers found, the unbreakable collective will. "Imagine, if you can," he begs, "what the achievement might have been had the goal been life rather than death, building new cities for the power age, rather than smashing existing cities to rubble."

—*Eric Schall.*

Stuart Chase wants people "to do an unheard of and difficult thing . . . to think."

And, more important, he points out to the Marxists, all this was done without socialism, without depriving the people of any essential freedoms —unless you count the draft.

Now, of course, the vision has faded; the collective determination is gone, and once again it is "every man for himself, every pressure group for itself."

Yet Mr. Chase is not without hope. There is a chance, he thinks, but only a chance, that this country together with the other nations of the world can accomplish what almost every human being wants; namely, economic security (meaning a job, not a handout) and lasting peace.

His own particular suggestions are, to be sure, somewhat vague. Mainly, he seems to want people to do an unheard of and difficult thing. He wants them to think. He wants them to choose a middle-road economy, a combination of government, unions, and big business. He wants them to realize that the words "free enterprise," as they are usually mouthed during political campaigns, are meaningless; he believes that it is possible, by a workable combination of private and government controls, to keep people working and eating, housed and clothed. If this were done—and Mr. Chase is emphatic in his belief that it can be—the unemployment of the 1930's would never return.

In the international field, Chase implores his readers to recognize that "the world is passing through its greatest stress and change and turmoil since the break up of the Roman Empire in the fifth century A.D." The cataclysm of the Atomic Age may lead to war, a final war which will catapult those few who survive into the Lower Paleolithic age. But it need not; reasonably sweet reason is still possible.

If, as I suspect, Mr. Chase's original assignment was to study the quote problems of veterans unquote, he has done an admirable job. He has dealt sparingly with the veteran as such because he has realized that the veteran is, after all, only a civilian who wore a uniform for awhile. And what the veteran wants is what all of us want. Our demands are really very simple—jobs and peace, peace and jobs. Mr. Chase has written an encouraging book. He thinks both are possible.

The Message

By Henry John Firley

THE message was written in the early weather
On the four walls of the mortal year.
Spring showers ran the words together
Into an indiscernible smear.

Summer dust settled, came autumn pall,
And a white storm banked the norther's wall.
With the message obscured, no one could read.
Opinions grew and none agreed.

One day the walls will be razed to find
The simple message for all mankind.

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TRANSLATORS LIKE TO EAT

WE ARE indebted to Randel Heymanson, editor of the Australian Newspaper Services in New York, for an extract from the *Sunday Times* of London (not to be confused with *The Times* of London) in which Desmond MacCarthy swings a haymaker at American translators. Mr. Heymanson himself does not take sides. "If Mr. MacCarthy's strictures are correct," he declares, "publication of his remarks in the United States might oblige publishers to take greater care in the selection of translators; if they are unfair, American scholars and critics should surely have an opportunity of replying to them."

Mr. MacCarthy finds an American translation of a Russian book which recently appeared in an English edition "flat, slovenly, and imprecise." He fails to present the evidence on which he bases this conclusion—may not the original Russian text have been flat, slovenly, and imprecise? The book, he concludes,

> should have been left to circulate in America, where translation is regarded as hack-work, and usually falls into the hands not of literary men but of those bilingualists who abound in the United States and are inexpert in two languages. The worst of it is that they are apt to be prompt with their travesties of European authors, and thus the first in the field; with the further result that publishers over here find it cheaper and safer to import inferior translations of modern foreign books than to commission better ones. We have suffered from this. If you have read the only available translations of Pirandello's plays (American) you will understand why he is so seldom performed; they are unspeakable. For many years English readers had to put up with wretched versions of Tolstoy's novels by Nathan H. Dole. . . . We had literally, as far as the genius of the world's greatest novelist is concerned, to live on the Dole—until our publishers began to encourage [Aylmer] Maude and Mrs. [Constance] Garnett. My advice to the reading public is never to buy an American translation—if that can be avoided. I do not mean translations by American scholars of classics such as, for instance, Mr. Trechmann's Montaigne, which is most useful for checking the picturesque inaccuracies of Florio and Cotton, but of modern foreign writers. The English publisher may prudently abstain from announcing the origin of the translation he is offering to the public, but you can quickly discover that by turning over a few pages. And then beware.

This blast, it will be noted, does give us credit for promptness, and by implication raps the knuckles of British publishers for their lack of enterprise. We are quick to appreciate a masterpiece by a foreigner, but we are clumsy bunglers when it comes to putting it into English. There seems to be a certain inconsistency here which is rather difficult to resolve.

Mr. MacCarthy's strictures appeared in print on August 26. When he composed them he had almost certainly not seen a letter to the editor of the *Times Literary Supplement* (no connection with the *Sunday Times*) written by Alan Moray Williams which had been published under the heading "A Translator's Protest" in the issue of August 17. Mr. Williams is concerned solely with the insular and not at all with the international phases of translation, and with its practical rather than its cultural aspects. He compliments the *TLS* for identifying translators in its reviews (when it knows who they are) and wishes other journals were as scrupulous: He continues:

> I think it is high time the question of translations was aired. The present position of translators is very unsatisfactory, and unless they are given a little more encouragement there is not likely to be any improvement in the standard of work done.
>
> A good translation is as much a piece of creative work as an artist's portrait—particularly where a difficult language like Russian is concerned—and it is a branch of literature that should be helped and encouraged in every way. Under present conditions, however, there is little inducement to treat the translation of foreign books in this country as anything but hackwork. Pay is poor—30s. a thousand words is, I think, the maximum offered; publishers, with some exceptions, do not print the translator's name in their advertisements, let alone on the dust-cover; and many reviewers, as I said, simply ignore his existence.
>
> In addition to these disadvantages, publishers appear to have the right to make alteration to a manuscript after the translator has completed it, without even consulting him.
>
> Unless translators get a "square deal" from publishers—and reviewers—the reading public cannot reasonably expect first-class translations.

Just whose eye is the mote in, anyway? J. T. W.

Preflight for Icarus

By Lloyd Frankenberg

SAMPLE the infinite.
Draw in the morning sky
Deep as the lungs will hold.
This draught must last till you are old.
This is the best of life
Not the beginning.

Wing clear, wing proud.
Wind up a ribbon of the sky.
Collect a star.
These are the hoarded hours that are.
Tomorrow is beyond a further cloud.

Spread your bright wings.
Even you young and silvered
Gods of Space
Must make a landing, one day,
On the commonplace.

Soar your brave wings.
Like Icarus you, too, may come
One shining day
Too close against a rising sun.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Inspector Dickens of the N.W.M.P.

SIR: I have just now read in a months-old issue of *SRL* (May 25) the controversy between Librarian Wallace and Newsman Babcock on Francis Jeffery Dickens, son of the great Charles.

Mr. Wallace states that Francis J. Dickens was a senior officer in the R.N.W.M.P. This is not accurate, because the famed Force did not acquire the "Royal" prefix until eighteen years after Francis Dickens's death. Francis was, however, an inspector in the N.W.M.P. Furthermore, an inspector, as compared to a superintendent, assistant commissioner or surgeon is, and was, considered a "junior," not a "senior," officer.

Canada's red-coated policemen were organized in 1873 as the North-West Mounted Police. In June 1904 the name was officially changed to Royal North-West Mounted Police. Since 1920 the name has been, and still is, Royal Canadian Mounted Police. These name changes correspond to three definite and clearly-defined stages of the Force's history and development, and it is considered a bad blunder to confuse the names by which the Force has been known.

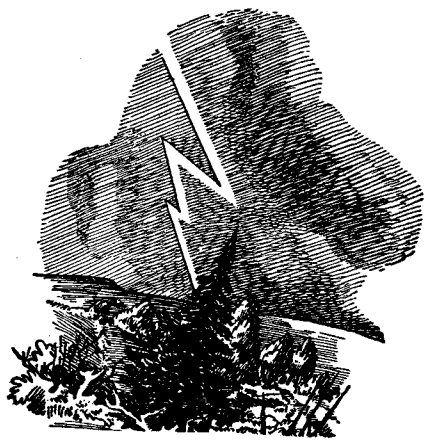
WILLIAM N. WILSON.

Ottawa, Ont.

Nature Fake

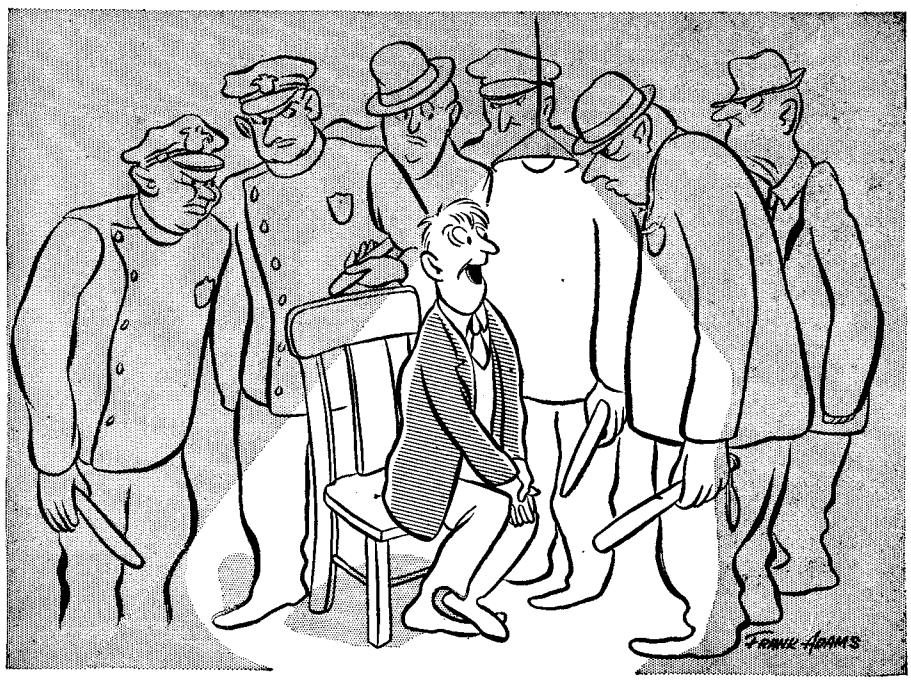
SIR: As my wife is the happy subscriber in our family to your distinguished publication, perhaps it is not for me (although I am equally delighted, generally, with its pages) to send you an adverse criticism. But for a periodical as eminent as yours, and as devoted as I believe to truth, accuracy, and sincerity, to present a drawing of lightning so utterly false as that which appears on page seven of your September 7 issue seems to me a most distressing evidence of carelessness.

Uncaring editors and advertising directors have fallen into the stupidity of late of suggesting lightning as zigzagging, but never have I seen it so abandonedly depicted as in this drawing on your page, where the backward leap is too flagrant to pass without remark. You surely know that lightning NEVER zigzags—never moves except to approach nearer its objective—cloud or earth. Have you no science editor who can keep you from again falling into such error, keeping you also upon the heights of knowledge?



THORNTON OAKLEY.

Villa Nova, Penn.



"To begin with . . . I did it!"

Canadian Ethnic Strains

SIR: Mr. Hugh MacLennan, in his otherwise very thoughtful article "Canada Between Covers," (*SRL*, Sept. 7) makes a most surprising omission in enumerating the major ethnic strains in the formation of the Canadian nation. I refer to the Irish and Lowland Scotch, mainly Protestant and, in this country, commonly called "Scotch-Irish." This strain has been prominent in Ontario and the West in agriculture, education, business, and politics. I was born and reared in the very heart of Ontario, at Orangeville, forty-five miles north of Toronto. I had hundreds of relatives in several townships thereabouts —all Protestant Irish and nearly all Orangemen, although Orangeville itself was named in honor of Orange Lawrence, a New Yorker who laid out the town. There I have seen and heard fifty Orange lodges celebrating the Battle of the Boyne, but nary a kiltie nor the skirl of a bagpipe. This chiel MacLennan claims ower muckle for his clansmen.

J. A. LEIGHTON.

Worthington, Ohio

A Title That Worked

SIR: In your comment on book titles (Aug. 17) you omitted one of the most apt. Dr. George Dorsey was a quiet, earnest college professor who was catapulted into literary prominence by one best-selling book. The work was a highbrow psychological study of mankind—few finished reading it. Because of his prominence Dorsey was invited to make college commencement speeches. They were jampacked with six syllable words, and the audience as well as the graduates had to guess at what he meant.

After one such address I asked him: "How did you get such a striking title for your book?"

"Well," he replied, "no one ever asked me that. I had written it and, let me see," twirling his ribboned eyeglasses, "and had tried a dozen titles, none of which seemed—ah—appropriate. So I took the proofs to my publisher, asked him to read them and suggest a title. The next day I called. He shoved the proofs across the desk with 'I can't make head nor tail of this darned thing. What in hell is it about, anyhow?' 'Why,' said I, 'why, it's why we behave like human beings.'

"There's your title!" he exploded. And it was. The public seems to have liked it.

C. M. HARGER.

Abilene, Kan.

Hymns of Hate

SIR: Here's a lethal bouquet for the glib reviewer
(May his tribe decrease, the sooner the fewer)
Smugly repeating what the author wrought,
He spoils the book by telling the plot.

M. MOON.

San Diego, Calif.

SIR: With homicidal lust I'm thrilling
To poleaxe those who have crowds "milling."

R. H. M.

Harrisburg, Pa.

SIR: Individuals I cannot ken
Give me "You can say that again."

NEIL MCCARTHY.

Chicago, Ill.

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Seeing Things

WHILE THERE'S HOPE

GETTING a taxi had not been easy. Times Square was as crowded as Times Square always is in the late afternoon. As unattractive, too. Broadway needs the night. It is made not for the sun or the moon but for Mazda. Before sundown it is hard to take. It is cheap and garish. It has the tawdry look of a tired chorus girl caught out in broad daylight with her make-up on and still wearing her spangles.

The three of us had semaphored in vain at the fleet of occupied cabs rushing past. Meanwhile we had been discussing Bob Hope, as was only natural since we had just seen him in "Monsieur Beaucaire"* at the Paramount across the street. To our surprise a taxi stopped almost in front of us. A man got out, and we jumped in. Having given our address, we started off through the crowds. Though we did not happen to mention him by name, we continued to talk about Bob Hope.

"He's funny. Yes, I'll agree," said I, "but I don't think he can compare with Danny Kaye."

Suddenly a fourth person joined our discussion. Unexpectedly. Abruptly. Authoritatively. It was the taxi driver. He was a dark-eyed, black-haired man in his early forties, with a voice that crossed his thin lips like a file on iron. He wore a khaki windbreaker, on the left sleeve of which I noticed the patch of the Army Air Corps.

"Ya wuz talkin' of Bob Hope, wuzn't ya?" he asked. He turned his head slightly and thereafter fixed his eyes on us in the mirror ahead of him.

We confessed we had been.

"I thut so."

Plainly he spoke as one who knew his Broadway. Like every critic (and everyone on Broadway *is* a critic), he was anxious to share his opinions. Somehow, while doing so in no uncertain terms, he contrived to negotiate his way through traffic without doing damage either to it or to his critique.

"I agree with ya poifecly. He ain't in Danny's class. Ya can't help likin' Bob Hope, but he ain't got Danny's style, if ya get whut I mean. Take patter, ferinstance. Say, did ya ever catch Hope in th' old days at th' Palace when two guys, his brothers I think they wuz, useta heckle him from a box? 'N afterwards on Broadway? Oh, he wuz funny 'nough. But he wuzn't never in Danny's class. Whut's more, a lot of th' biggest guys in show bizness—guys that I've carried right in this very cab—has said th' same thing. —Comedians, I mean."

Critics have a way of being acceptable—I almost said "tolerable"—when you discover they are wise enough to agree with you. I found this taxi driver a prince among the tribe; a second Daniel come to judgment. Because, assuredly, from any traditional point of view there is nothing more difficult to explain than the preeminence Bob Hope enjoys in the realm of zanies.

During his days in the theatre he appeared with a formidable roster of professionals. With Marilyn Miller and the Astaires in "Smiles" 'way back in 1930. With Willie Howard in "Ballyhoo of 1932." With Fay Templeton and Sydney Greenstreet in "Roberta" the next year. With Harry Richman in "Say When!" the following season. With Fannie Brice in the "Ziegfeld Follies." And, above all, with Ethel Merman and Jimmy Durante in "Red, Hot and Blue" in 1936. You might have thought contact with such professionalism would have proven contagious. But it did not. No rolling stone ever left moss more uncollected than Mr. Hope has the technical lessons he might have learned from such associates.

". . . the most winning aspect of Mr. Hope's performance is that he contents himself with being Bob Hope."

To my shame I find that Mr. Hope made almost no impression upon me when I saw him in his Broadway days. Though, like almost everyone else, I have a weakness for comics, I gather that in those years I did not have one for him. My old and jaundiced files from the *New York Post* confront me with the ugly fact that I left Mr. Hope unnoticed until I saw him in "Roberta." Then I described his efforts as "trying." Apparently I thought him "hilarious" in "Say When!" although I never got around to saying why or how. In the "Ziegfeld Follies" I did thank him for rendering "suave First Aid treatment to many ailing comic skits." But later that same year, when he appeared in "Red, Hot and Blue," I was ungrateful enough to confess that "Bob Hope as a comedian is a cultivated taste that I must admit I have never been able to cultivate." In other words, as a Hollywood talent scout I would have been a howling success in more ways than one.

Since then, Mr. Hope has, of course, won as wide a public as any entertainer has ever gained for himself. On the air and on the screen his admirers (the Hopefuls) run in millions to hear or to see him. In print, too, where most jokes can die painful deaths, hundreds of thousands have delighted in his gags. By the young and by the old the man is loved the year around almost as much as Santa Claus is by juvenile doubters when December sneaks into its fourth week.

Nor is he cherished without reason. No comedian during the war did a finer job. His "I Never Left Home" was more than a funny book. It was a gallant one. And modest in the midst of its inevitable actorisms. John Steinbeck, who saw Mr. Hope in action among the wounded overseas, once paid eloquent tribute to his human decencies, his instinctive good taste, and his mental quickness. Whole armies of GI's, if they were Steinbecks, would submit the same affidavits.

Perhaps what bothered me when I first saw Mr. Hope is what troubles me somewhat even now. I have in mind the slight amateurishness which to this day characterizes his playing. It may be this very feature of his acting which proves most endearing to a public over-exposed to professionals. I do not know. I find guessing difficult.

Although he is a master of the double-take and is expert at timing,

*MONSIEUR BEAUCAIRE, screen play by Melvin Frank and Norman Panama based on novel by Booth Tarkington. Directed by George Marshall. Produced by Paul Jones for Paramount Pictures. With Bob Hope, Joan Caulfield, Patric Knowles, Marjorie Reynolds, Cecil Kellaway, Joseph Schildkraut, Reginald Owen, Constance Collier, etc.

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Music and Lyrics by IRVING BERLIN
Book by HERBERT and DOROTHY FIELDS
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Directed by JOSHUA LOGAN
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"A Very Big Hit!"—Walter Winchell
KERN AND HAMMERSTEIN'S
"Show Boat"
Music by JEROME KERN
Book and Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
Based on the novel by EDNA FERBER
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the sources of Mr. Hope's strength are scarcely ever technical. That is, if one excepts the labors of his gagmen. He does not dance or sing well. His pantomime is indifferent. Yet he is undeniably humorous. One of the funniest things about him is that he is funny. Nonetheless, funny he is at the moment of being seen, even though his japeries have a strange way of leaving the memory unhaunted. He is a clown whose personality, not his costume, is his trademark—his personality and his face.

His is an uncommonly alert face. Although English born, it has grown up into a commodity as American as Mr. Hope's voice or his humor. It is a face that might belong to a shoe salesman, if it were not for its incurable collegiate quality. In the midst of the most smoking room surroundings, it somehow suggests pennants, and coonskin coats, and cheer leaders. Mr. Hope is an ageless undergraduate. He may be a little too old for jitterbugging, yet he is young enough in spirit to hover over a jukebox.

There is a wonderful messy spruceness about him. Or is it a spruce messiness? He is dapper and tousled all at one time. His black hair, parted in the middle, may link him to the precrewcut generation. But it has a jauntiness about it which is as youthful as that unlined face of his which thrusts its chin out to meet you and sends its thin nose rising like a toy Trylon from the Flushing meadows.

The truth is there is something nice about Bob Hope which shines like the enamel on a well-scoured tub. No man can ferret out an innuendo with greater swiftness or manage to remain more unsmudged by it. He is an acknowledged head of the Raised Eyebrow or Rolled Eyes Department. If he likes to leer, it is because to him sex is palpably a God-given gag. Yet, leering or smirking, or walking with that deliberately rolling stride with which he parodies male weakness, Mr. Hope's niceness persists. His latest movie makes that as self-evident as certain of those truths more recognized by the Signing Fathers than by many of their descendants.

For whimsical and unnecessarily expensive reasons, Hollywood has chosen to call this new film "Monsieur Beaucaire." Only readers of Mr. Tarkington's novelette will know what they are missing. To others the rose, which has become something of a "Tillie's Tomato Surprise," will doubtless smell as sweet. Except for its title, the movie bears as much relation to Mr. Tarkington's tale as Broadway, U.S.A., does to Broadway, England.

If only Bing Crosby were present, it might better have been known as

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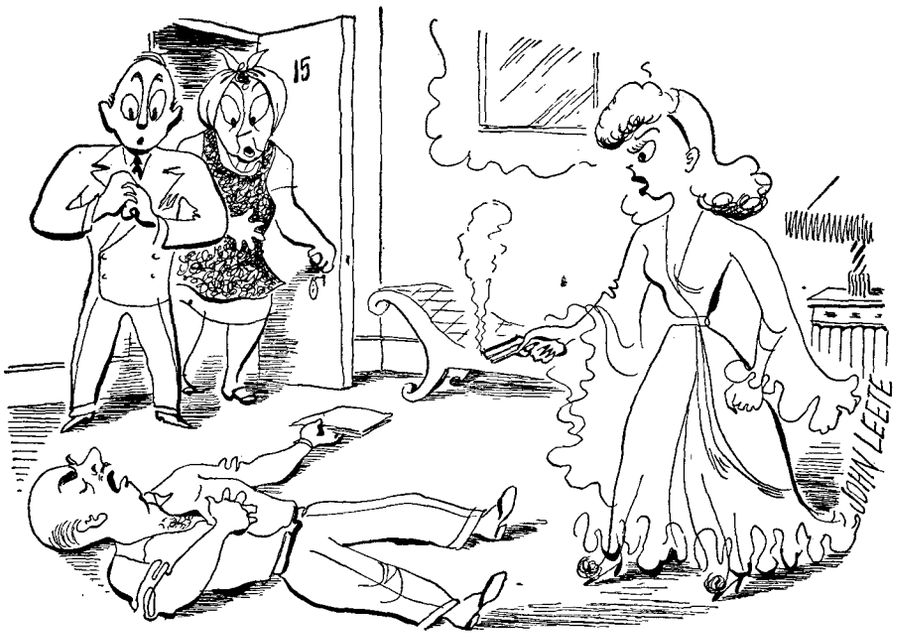
"The Road to Madrid." The setting is no longer the pump room in Bath over which Beau Nash ruled as a sovereign. His Grace, the card-cheating Duke of Winterset, is missing. So is Lady Mary Carlisle. So, quite intentionally, is the flavor of C. D. Williams's turn-of-the-century illustrations and the coach-and-postilion sweep of Mr. Tarkington's prose.

Even the barber Mr. Hope plays does not turn out to be His Highness, Prince Louis-Philippe de Valois, Duke of Nemours, Duke of Montpensier, First Prince of the Blood Royal, First Peer of France, Lieutenant-General of French Infantry, Governor of Dauphiné, Knight of the Golden Fleece, Grand Master of the Order of Notre Dame, of Mount Carmel, and of St. Lazarus in Jerusalem; and cousin to His Most Christian Majesty, Louis the Fifteenth, King of France. No. No. Nothing like that. To the unbitter end he remains Bob Hope in costume, though not at all disguised. The Palace, at which Mr. Hope begins those caperings which finally land him in Spain, is not Versailles. It belongs to B. F. Keith rather than Madame de Pompadour's boy friend.

The movie is all Hollywood, undiluted, uncut, and, by design, 90° senseproof. Its court scenes are of an overstuffed and vulgar richness which only movie moguls could or would afford. Its French sovereigns are musical comedy buffoons, waiting only for their music cues to indulge in those stiff-kneed cavortings which, in all such charades, are the laugh-winning lot of those who are of middle years or over. Its court beauties, whether in the realms of Louis XV or King Philip of Spain, are women wearing elaborate white wigs and lavish pannier costumes who, vocally, mentally, and physically, might have been as happy, and made others happier, as bathing beauties or manicurists. Their voices are ugly screechings which make some of us wish that voice classes were compulsory in all American high schools where whatever may get into the head of a pupil is apt to escape from it in tones which puncture listening ears.

Even so, there are some excruciatingly funny scenes; scenes which seize upon and parody the elder Fairbanks tradition of Robin Hood, and of solitary swordsmen leaping off balconies, swinging down the shrubbery, and killing off hosts of *en garde* adversaries. These episodes make for excellent fooling. They are shrewd spoofings of the romantic, swashbuckling tradition, and turn that tradition inside out. They do this as surely as my grandmother (who saw her) used to tell me that Mary Anderson at her debut as a girl in Louisville turned her pockets inside out from sheer nervousness when, as Juliet, she was supposedly dead in the tomb scene.

Then, of course, there is Bob Hope. Although diverting enough throughout, when functioning farcically as a barber at Versailles, or when forced to impersonate a Prince of the Blood in Spain, or when dueling against his will at the Spanish court, he is at his best. Perhaps, for his fans, the most winning aspect of Mr. Hope's performance is that he contents himself with being Bob Hope. Nothing more. Nothing less. But funny as he often is, when I think of Danny Kaye in connection with him, I find myself compelled to doff my hat to that New York taxi driver no less than to Mr. Hope. JOHN MASON BROWN.



"He told me this week's Double-Crostic solution before I'd finished it."

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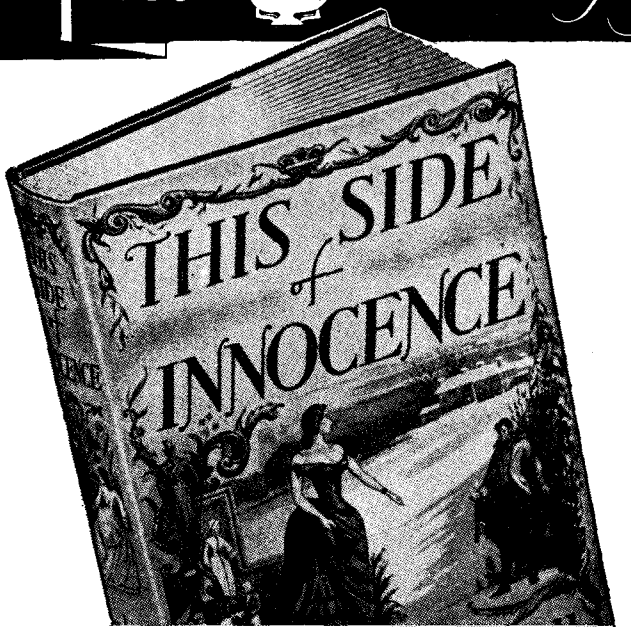

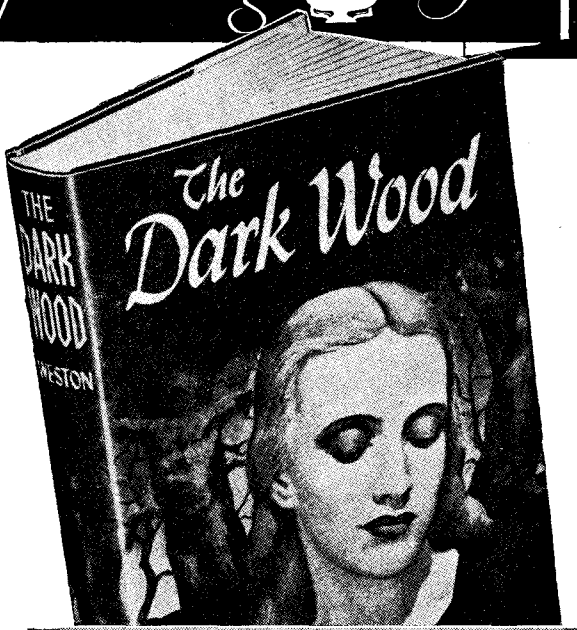

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by WILLIAM C. BULLITT

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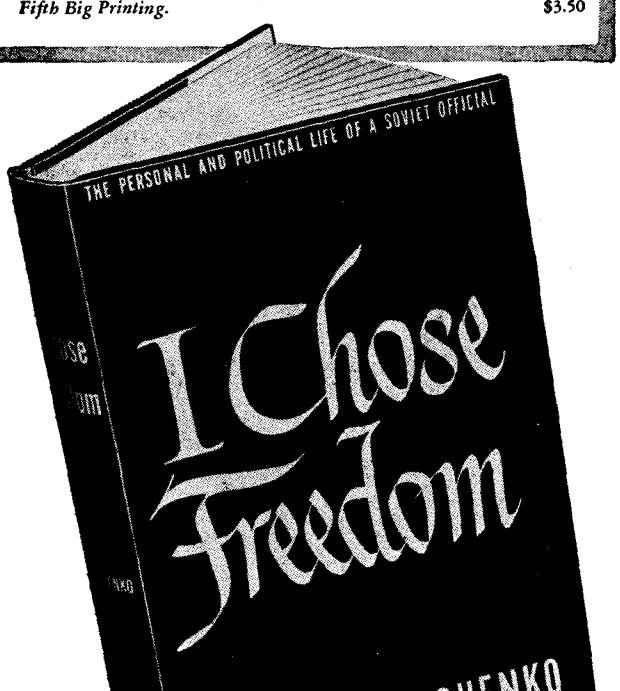

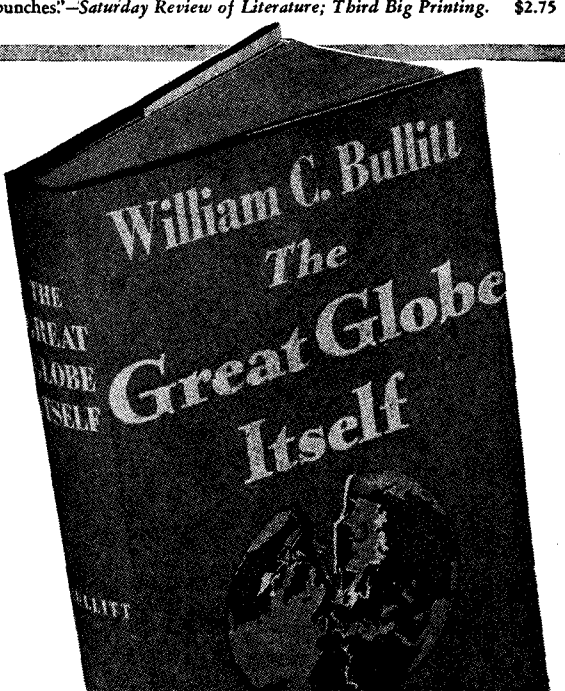

AT ALL BOOKSTORES CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS AT ALL BOOKSTORES

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In the Days of Coronado

THE SEVEN CITIES OF GOLD. By Virginia Hersch. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc. 1946. 243 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by EDWIN L. SABIN

"GOLDEN GREED" might be a graphic and better title for this novel, which emphasizes the incidents of Captain-General Coronado's expedition from Mexico to New Spain in search of opulent kingdoms asserted to exist in the desert north.

The proselyting Friar Marcos de Niza had returned from the north believing that he had looked upon Cibola, said to be one of the legendary Seven Golden Cities. Mexico was agog with inflated rumors, for still the stories grew, rooted in a few emerald-green arrowheads, a few bastard turquoise stones, coral beads, a copper rattle, and several strange Indians, exhibited by the Cabeza de Vaca gross-country wanderers from the Texas coast, who brought report of populous provinces in the far north.

Viceroy Don Antonio de Mendoza appointed knightly Don Francisco Vasquez de Coronado, governor of New Galicia Province in the west, to command an expedition for Cibola and the other wonder cities.

Men bought licenses to serve as soldiers. Idle young caballeros of noble blood were grub-staked by money-lenders, and by Viceroy Mendoza, who hoped to make them of use. The folly column of mounted knights and squires, foot soldiery, baggage and supply train that in February 1540 marched under Captain-General Coronado of gilded armor soon had to be severely trimmed. So-called Cibola, of the Zuñi mud-built pueblos in western New Mexico, was taken by storm. The booty was corn and beans and salt, and inferior turquoise—the food being the chief value, as often happens on the adventure trail.

From this Cibola, a name which referred to buffalo, not to a people, Coronado marched eastward and northeastward in search of a marvel Quivira. He planted the Cross of Church and King among the buffalo Indians of northeastern Kansas, and with his disappointed, rusty, and ragged following returned to Mexico in the spring of 1542.

Virginia Hersch has novelized this treasure hunt by creating a young knight-errant chronicler, Carlos Enrique Gomez y Miruelo, who goes forth to qualify, in way of riches, for the hand and body of the high and lovely Doña Cristabella Dolores Isabella de Ahumada y Dominguez, claimed by affluent old Don Rodriguez Suarez, one-eyed crippled veteran of the lists of war and women.

It is Don Rodriguez who outfits young Carlos on shares. Since Don Rodriguez was already of large estate the reason for this speculation which may set up a young rival seems to this reviewer not clear, especially when all veterans granted estates for services were required to marry within three years or forfeit their holdings.

As for Doña Cristabella, she was one of thirty spinsters shipped, prepaid, to the marriage market in Mexico City. She looked to closing a bargain with a suitor who could meet her luxurious tastes. Here was old Rodriguez, but personable youth with an ox-cart store of emeralds pictured a more attractive proposition.

Leaving Doña Cristabella to the masterful Don Rodriguez, Carlos rides for Cibola and the emeralds in the column of Coronado. He is not in touch with Cristabella again for more than two years, which is unfortunate, also, for the suspense that would govern the story. The wide interval is filled in with details, related in the first person, of the marches. There enters a girl camp-follower, Anita, who threatens to make complications. But while the succession of incidents develops her character, many of the

WHEN Sharon started out for San Francisco, she was just a confidential secretary on a routine job. Her instructions were clear; her reservations made. The manila envelope she had to deliver was safely tucked into her handbag. The train was getting up steam in the Los Angeles station. She got on. *And her whole secure world dissolved into frantic unreality.*

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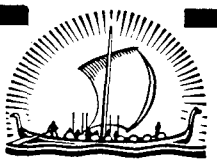

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historical details of country and natives tend to overload the narrative, and explanatory remarks slow the action. Readers to whom the Coronado expedition is news will find interest, however, in the factual record.

The story is well colored, for Carlos, the chronicler, has the gift of language comparable to that of Castañeda, the accepted historian of the expedition.

First Novel and Last

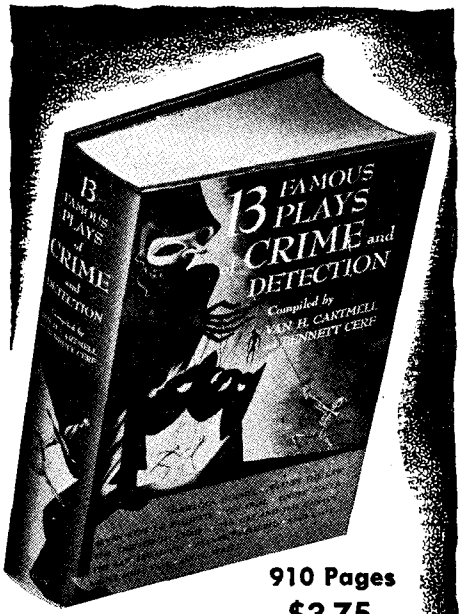
THE DEVIL IS A LONELY MAN. By Morrison Wood. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co. 1946. 497 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THIS is Morrison Wood's only novel; it found its way into the Crowell office long after Wood had died in a Japanese prison camp. Therefore any judgment upon it must necessarily be only a half-judgment, one that will be forever incomplete and perhaps unjust, since there will never be another book to indicate just where Wood was going. It takes two points to define a direction. But we must speak of this book, nevertheless, upon its own merits.

It is, then, an indication of great talents scarcely tapped and certainly scarcely directed. It is filled with emotion and empty of pattern. It is touched with poetry and perception, and marred by a lack of taste and intellect. Thus its worship of dynamic strength raises its hero, Anthony Wayne, to the stature of a god, and casts an Olympian aura about every one of his deeds. But Anthony Wayne is a particularly sadistic beater of Negro slaves and despoiler of men and women, a divine white hero of Alabama; and his deification can be attributed only to a complete innocence of comparative principles. It reminds me of my early experiences with movies and dime novels. Once the Hero was established, there was no judgment necessary or even dreamed of.

But in a mature novel this has a more serious connotation, and must cast doubts upon the maturity or intentions of the writer. This is the flaw in the gem that distorts every one of its facets. The book is alive with character and movement; it storms eagerly in every direction, to discover the varieties of experience with a very young fervor. But yet at the heart of it, tarnishing everything, is the worship of mindless conquest, of the ruthless Hero. Whether this is first thought or last, we shall never know.



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One American Dream

HOUSE ABOVE THE RIVER. By Michael Foster. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1946. 358 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

THIS is, as Mr. Foster points out in his prefatory note, a work of fiction, and he goes on to declare his complete independence of John Conway, the novel's first-person narrator. "As to the validity of his (Conway's) beliefs or his attitudes, the writer has no opinion. A novelist at work should have no opinions. It is not his business."

This last is not only questionable but practically impossible. A good reporter may or may not be able to get along without opinion, but a good novelist, never. It is the secret compass of his work, and I cannot think of a first-rate novelist today who has not been governed by it. As for Mr. Foster, his novel is quite plainly crowded with his opinion. It is in fact the orchestration of one central and crucial opinion: on the state of the nation.

In these times, which seem more and more to be an oppressive breathing space between disasters, the thought has come to him as it must have to so many other men: what word can I leave to my son, now while I still can think consecutively? What shall I tell him of America and American character, past and present, what shall I suggest as a guiding principle to live upon, what shall I ask him to remember and believe? Mr. Foster has written a book to answer this need in himself. John Conway is speaking to his son. He tells him of the Conways of Virginia, several generations of them, of the kind of people they were and the kind of country they made. And, in a series of asides, he offers a running commentary on the change he sees coming over America, the people and the philosophy (so different from the Conways and their philosophy) that are crowding front and center upon the stage.

Now what, first of all, is the America of the Conways, upon which the narrator looks back with such nostalgia? The scene is the old South, Virginia, a beautiful landscape the contemplation of which brings out in Mr. Foster his fruitiest writing. The landscape, when it is regarded more closely, is peopled by omnipotent aristocrats seated in their libraries, and, in the back, "a happy kitchen . . . filled with African laughter." Chief among the Conways is Grandfather Balastre Conway, who holds forth throughout the book at amazing and eloquent length in courtly periods of reminiscence and exhortation. From this we get a tapestried history of the Southerner's America that has long been familiar, made of shooting and horse-fancying, dreaming of Shiloh and the Lost Cause, good drinking, speaking acquaintance with a good deal of Greek and with ancient history, and a strong conscious sense of the aristocratic, "the interesting distinguishing mark between an aristocrat and—say—a professional labor leader." There is constant reference to the "certain aristocracy of mind, of attitude, which I believe to be peculiarly American," and increasingly gloomy noting of the forces that are dissipating this aristocratic dream. One among these is the "appalling means of mass communication"; another is "the curious tendency of twentieth-century man toward collectivism," the curious attempt to "solve" (in ironic quotes) a "problem" with the earnestness of "forum thinking." These, and the appearance of a democratic man without background, are the clouds over today's unaristocratic America which are driving the Conways into a splendid, backward-looking isolation.

I seem to have treated Mr. Foster's novel as though it were a sociopolitical treatise, and that is what it really is. Its core of nostalgic thinking is its most important part. If a man spends a whole book in pointing out to his son a vanishing American dream, and warning him of certain fearful developments, then the essence of the dream and the essence of his fears are what count; they must determine what meaning the book possesses. I can add that there is a long love story spread across the novel, between John Conway and Regan Berkeley. He gets her, he loses her, he gets her. It is not very credible. But what John learns from his grandfather, and passes on to his son, is. That is the story, clearly written.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 653)

B. WALTER:
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There flows from music, irrespective of its ever-changing emotional expression, an unchanging message of comfort: its dissonances strive toward consonance — they must be resolved; every musical piece ends in a consonance.

* An Autobiography; Translated from the German by James A. Galton (1946).

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A Thriller of Personal Salvation

MINE OWN EXECUTIONER. By Nigel Balchin. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1946. 336 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by R. L. NORTH

ABOUT a year ago Mr. Balchin wrote a thrilling novel called "The Small Back Room." What made it particularly notable was his ability to make easy and casual use of a highly specialized body of data. It is the kind of trick that H. G. Wells used to play with science, except that Mr. Balchin, being less the philosopher and less the mechanist, keeps his focus more stubbornly upon the human element, which is to him the greatest of the mysteries. In that novel last year he performed some legerdemain with a lot of top-drawer material from the records of the British Army Council for Defense, but what he really used it for was to probe at the innards of a young scientist very much involved in these affairs; half the thrill was in a superbly written bomb scare, the other half in a man's attempt to discover what was ticking inside himself.

Now Mr. Balchin has moved closer to this problem. This novel "Mine Own Executioner" is about the profession of psycho-analysis, not a very reverent treatment but certainly a well-informed one, written out of more than casual experience. By the time he is through he has put his finger upon some of the things that have undoubtedly been said before but not as sensibly: that psycho-analysis is a tentative and dangerous groping in the dark; that it may be in some respects a heroic and noble task, in others a patent fraud; that a good lay analyst is as good as an M.D. and the M.D.'s are green with fury about it; that analysts need not be expected to be wholly normal themselves, that they might indeed be far from effective if they were. All very likely and debatable, and yet I should say that this is merely the appropriate trappings for the main event. When Felix Milne looks into the blurred image of his face in the mirror, and thinks: "There were Lady Maresfield and Mrs. Betts and Miss Lucas and Mrs. Sears and all of them, and he was kind and patient and understanding. But Patricia was unhappy and frightened—frightened of him . . .", then the thing is nakedly disclosed. The physician is diseased and cannot heal himself.

Milne is a lay analyst, and Patricia is his wife. Their relationship is a strange, tangled one, something they realize and talk about and push into this shape and that with words; but all the time they know that there is some destructive element in Felix which impels him to pick their lives to pieces. Milne is a patient and devoted analyst. It is plain that he is wonderful with his patients, at the same time that he is perversely cruel, when he is not boyishly devoted, with Patricia. His practice and his personal dilemma play one upon the other like contrapuntal themes, until the division breaks and they plunge together. One of his patients gets out of control, and the book is forced to a searing climax, in bloodshed and chase, in Milne's self-flagellation, in terrific tension. This is a thriller again, and again it is a study of a man's personal salvation, by his bootstraps. Mr. Balchin has a cool, light touch, but he is a very serious man just the same. I am not certain just where he is going, but it is a downright exciting thing to watch him while he's on his way.

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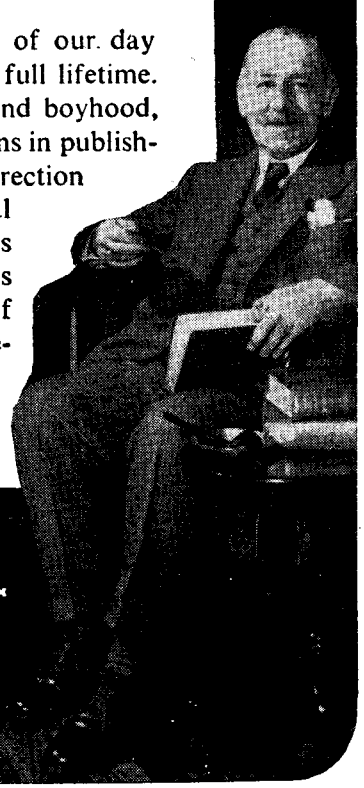

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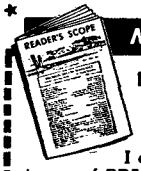

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"War Story," But—

SPEARHEAD. By Martin Absug. New York: The Dial Press. 1946. 272 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN BARKHAM

MR. ABSUG has written an honest, unpretentious, sometimes moving novel whose sober worth well merits recognition. It would be a great pity if the current prejudice against war books were to deny this promising young writer the encouragement he deserves.

There is nothing very spectacular about his story. Its characters are a group of officers and men in Battery C, a rough-tough outfit that has come all the way from Gafsa to the Bulge. Its action is the hail of hell which descended on the battery when it was briefly cut off from support during the German break-through. There is no love interest, no lyrical scene-setting, no ponderous soliloquizing. There are only the elemental facts of life and death, food and sleep, comradeship and courage.

The story is lean and alive, stripped of everything but life-in-the-instant. Captain Hollis, unsure in his command, resenting but requiring the calm assurance of his deputy, Lieutenant Knupfer; Pfc. Fernandez, best mechanic in the outfit, who hated being rushed, as the captain never failed to do; Sergeant Conally, easy-going guy, severed foot in hand, frozen into fear. And so forth. These men, and others like them, blindly obeying orders they often do not understand, are the core and kernel of any conflict. Wars may be planned in headquarters, but battles are fought in fields and ditches. Mr. Absug's accomplishment lies in the fact that, by focussing on a few soldiers for a few desperate days, he has caught this quintessential quality of men at war.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE!

Each blank in this quiz (by Helen Pettigrew, of Charleston, Arkansas) is to be filled in with a different form of water. A score of 22 proves you are an excellent swimmer. With a score of 18 you're good, and you can keep your head above water with a 14, but below 10 you're sunk. The answers are on page 35.

1. I love thy rocks and .....
2. I'd rather be a dog and ..... the moon.
3. The flowers that bloom in the ..... tra la!
4. If I were king ..... what ..... nations would I bring.
5. ..... to thee, blithe spirit!
6. There is an eye which could not ..... a moment on that grave to look.
7. Oh, give me the flashing brine, the ..... and the tempest's roar!
8. Roll on, thou deep and dark blue ....., roll!
9. The Owl and the Pussycat went to .....
10. What ..... between him and the seraphim!
11. When ..... hang by the wall.
12. What objects are the ..... of thy happy strain?
13. It is a tale told by an idiot, full of ..... and fury.
14. Into each life some ..... must fall.
15. And out again I curve and flow to join the brimming .....
16. The breaking ..... dashed high.
17. Humpty Dumpty had a great .....
18. There is a ..... in the affairs of men.
19. In full glory reflected now shines on the .....
20. Announced by all the trumpets of the sky, arrives the.....
21. Build me ....., O worthy Master! Staunch and strong, a goodly vessel.
22. Where the ..... is shallow the weakfish stay.
23. Like the ..... on the gowan lying is the fa' o' her fairy feet.
24. The long light shakes across the .....
25. Over the bounding .....
26. Like summer ..... came her tears.
27. And cold as the spray of the rock-beating .....
28. And summer ..... could hardly cool the fever on my brow.
29. And it's hard to part forever from the old .....
30. Each ..... and cavern of the dangerous shore.

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Mexico off the Beaten Track

DUST ON MY HEART. By Neill James. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1946. 302 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ELIZABETH FAGG

HERE is one traveller who missed Cuernavaca, Taxco, and Acapulco, Mexico's tourist inevitables. These places are not even indexed in Neill James's book. Having a fresh angle on Mexico, the author would have done well to omit her subtitle "Petticoat Vagabond in Mexico," which suggests the appearance of another of those dreary Mexico-land-of-romance opuses written by hit and run authors.

Her only excuse is, of course, she had already been a "Petticoat Vagabond in Aniu Land," a "Petticoat Vagabond among the Nomads," etc.—perpetuation of the cloying self-epithet must have become like the Rover-Boy habit. Very unfortunate, in this case.

Anything-but-petticoated are her encounters with Mexican characters and scenes which few city Mexicans themselves know, much less the foreign visitor. And there is nothing frilly about her vigorous, vivid descriptions of these encounters either. If her adventures make other Mexican vacations seem pale, it must be remembered she goes to lengths to which most folks won't go—even people like herself who purposefully take trips to write about them. She is the congenital explorer who sleeps soundly on dirt floors, can eat a three-*tortilla* breakfast, then walk thirteen kilometers across blazing sands or ride horseback all day in a downpour.

This hardihood ended in disasters. After a Dantesque two-night sojourn inside Popocatepetl's fuming crater, she rolled a thousand feet down its icy 17,000 foot slope and was "immobilized" for months with multiple fractures. Barely mended, she hiked off to new-born Paricutin volcano, where, weighted by volcanic ash, her sleeping shelter collapsed, triple-fracturing her pelvis. No wonder her hair afterwards turned white.

Realistic, with a sharp social sense for the underdog, Miss James brings the Mexican Indian to life, the "forgotten man" to whom the Mexican Revolution promised so much and has given so little. Without sentimentality, she pictures the sub-human existence of destitute Otomies in the arid Mezquital region. Yearly earnings often average ten dollars. Pulque substitutes for water, sometimes for food. In Oaxaca State, Zapotecan and Mixtecan Indians living over rich mica deposits were too poor to cure themselves of malaria. Remote Estetla village, for instance, sixty percent malaria-ridden, needing 12,000 quinine pills, received the usual annual Health Department allotment: one hundred pills, enough to cure five victims. The author is compassionate. When Indians prefer their squat, dark, windowless cactus huts to the Government's new, brick-floored adobe houses, she understands: an earthern floor is to sleep on.

She shares huts and food with these Indians, their fiestas, cock-fights, market days, religious mysteries; she sick-calls with the rural doctor, comforts the lonely country teacher. As long as she is descriptive and historical, she provides memorable reading. As a reporter of topical and national events, which fortunately is infrequent, she has relied too heavily on unsubstantiated Mexican news reports. While not great literature, her book adds a personable, individual work to the Mexican travel shelf.

"When once the dust of Mexico has settled upon your heart, you cannot then find peace in any other land," is the proverb inspiring her title. Miss James manages to shake a little of this dust which has settled on her own heart onto the heart of the reader.

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Life on Threadbare Campus

SKINNY ANGEL. By Thelma Jones. New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. 1946. 334 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by JAMES P. WOOD

THE skinny angel who gives this biographical story its title was not by any of the customary definitions an angel, and certainly she was not skinny. She was the rather unusual wife of a more unusual teacher. A daughter has made both of them the central characters in what is as much the story of faculty life in a number of small Middle Western colleges in the early 1900's as it is the life story of her parents.

Mother was pretty, fat, and possessed of an indomitable and contagious sense of humor. Thorwald, the father, was a humorless Norwegian with a fierce love of teaching, a wild imagination, a monumental dignity, and full belief in each of the struggling denominational colleges of Nebraska, Minnesota, Missouri, and points adjacent which paid him starvation wages for his inspired efforts.

Sometimes they paid him less than that. Sometimes the colleges demanded more than Father or anyone else could supply. Often the situation was so bad that even Father was forced to move on. In each spot and in every situation Mother, who produced a new child frequently and often at inconvenient times, made the best of everything.

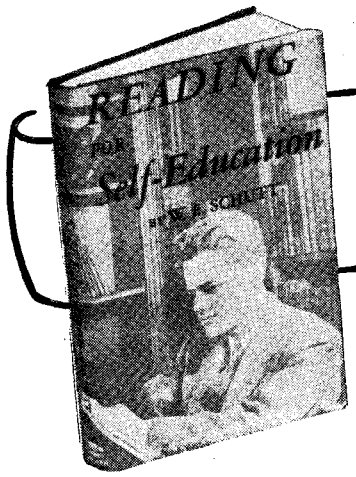
She made friends everywhere, and she made valiant efforts to introduce something of her own love of life where the atmosphere was either too pious or too sterile to support it. In all the ways made necessary by scanty income and the difficulties of inadequate quarters on threadbare campuses she somehow managed so that her family could achieve the appearance of dignified living called for by her husband's profession.

Father did not help much in some ways. He was always too terribly in earnest. More than once he brought home to live with his family indigent students of whom he expected wonderful intellectual accomplishment or who had somehow attracted his ready sympathy. He bought equities in houses that were always too large or too small or too inconveniently placed for the comfortable living of his swelling family. His ideals and enthusiasm even went to keeping chickens in one room whenever he was not closely watched and to describing to his children incredible adventures, preferably in the company of his hero Theodore Roosevelt, that he had never had.

When his children repeated these tales as fact to other faculty children there were sometimes embarrassing complications. There were always complications involving other people anyway, for at each new stop the family were thrown into close association with the eccentric or viciously ambitious or neurotic or tyrannical or merely unhappy individuals and groups in the faculty.

It was Mother always who had to solve these problems while at the same time she was urging her husband on to new and larger ventures in more important educational endeavors and institutions. Father did go on to success as a teacher and as a school administrator. He went on into situations, too common in actuality, where his educational principles and ideals brought him into conflict with the ignorance and viciousness of politicians. When he did reach the heights, Mother, who had often indicated the way, kept the faster pace and with her common sense and her humor built a full life for all her family and for as many of those as she could competently reach.

"Skinny Angel" is pleasantly readable and completely written. Perhaps neither of its central characters becomes in the eyes of the reader as distinctive and remarkable as each must have seemed to the book's author, but they do become people real enough to arouse the reader's interest and sympathy. From "The Way of All Flesh" through "Life with Father" into more recent and similar accounts there have been so many life stories of one or both parents written by a son or daughter that a new one must have either great novelty of subject matter or unusually skillful handling to achieve any real distinction. "Skinny Angel" has neither. Perhaps the story is most significant for its realistic picture of the drab, narrow, and intellectually limited education offered by backward small country colleges not too many years ago and of the valiant efforts of teachers such as Thorwald to improve it.



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Try to Get In

ADMISSION TO AMERICAN COLLEGES. By Benjamin Fine. New York: Harper & Bros. 1946. 225 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by HAROLD FIELDS

THE phenomenon of a college having room for only 400 admissions to the freshman class, for which it has received 8000 applications, is common these days. Upon what basis is the final decision made? Do colleges select students on scholarship alone, or do they recognize compensatory factors that may offset a scholastic record that is just average? Should not more young men and women "who have an intellectual curiosity about the world" be admitted? These are the problems with which Benjamin Fine deals.

The author, who is the educational editor of the *New York Times,* bases his findings on the results of a questionnaire sent to 450 colleges and universities. He found a challenge in the exclusion of the 1,000,000 high school boys and girls who fail to enter our colleges each year. He asks: What are we to do for the 85 per cent group between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one who are not in college? Should not college entrance requirements be modified to provide for the non-academic students (such as those in our vocational high schools)? Is there not need for a new philosophy that will consider the individual differences among high school students? Should all students be selected on the basis of potential leadership in society? Does a functioning democracy not demand an intelligent followership, as well?

Mr. Fine presents at length the requirements of admission to specific colleges and universities, naming them in each instance. In this respect, the book is a valuable guide to prospective students and their parents. He goes on to discuss the abnormal influx of veterans who, while entitled to every consideration, have elbowed aside the recent high-school graduate. He writes at length on the relative importance of aptitude and psychological tests, of college entrance examinations, and of the recommendations sent in by schools and individuals on behalf of the student who is applying.

The importance of participation in extra-curricular activities in determining the order of preference for admission is made the subject of a full chapter. In short, the author seeks to answer every question that the average father and mother of a college age child generally ask. He gives equal treatment to men's and women's colleges, realizing that the problem is equally acute for both sexes.

The book is frank and clear in its presentation. The author's sound and constructive recommendations, the specific references he makes to the admission requirements of the different colleges and universities, the overall picture of the situation throughout the country today, make this a most timely and helpful volume.

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HEARING THINGS

A REHABILITATED COMPOSER

OUR libraries are replenishing their shelves with European books published during the war years and therefore unavailable on this side of the water. Among them there are many on musical subjects, and they reflect faithfully the vicissitudes that befell the arts during the first eight or ten years of the Millennium which the Third Reich promised under the New Order. The German books are, for the most part, worthless; they falsify history, deprecate everything outside their own, and usually begin with a fulsome praise of the regime in general and *Reichskulturminister* Goebbels in particular. Perusing the dictionaries and histories of music, one is especially impressed by the fate of Mendelssohn. The 1945 edition of an otherwise excellent encyclopaedia belittles him but still has a few things to say in his favor; in 1940 there is a (J) after his name and he is all but ignored.

The list of yellow-starred musicians is lengthy, and one is impressed by the names encountered therein, for somehow their bearers always stood for the best in German musical life, and were as much a part of German cultural life as all the high and mighty *von*'s and *zu*'s. Many of these fine musicians were primarily performers, and as such their fame and glory were often ephemeral; among the composers, too, there are many who did not survive their own day. But even the most rabid Nazi historian could not eliminate Mendelssohn from the roster of German musicians, for he was one of the major sources of German romantic music. They can burn his scores and they can demolish his statues, but in order to eradicate his memory completely they would have to destroy the scores of Schumann, of Brahms, and of many others of the romantic movement, for they are all profoundly indebted to this gentle and infinitely refined poet of music.

A true child of the age, Mendelssohn's gifts were many and varied. His extraordinary abilities showed themselves early and were wisely guided by his intelligent and wealthy parents. At nine he was a good pianist and in the following year made his debut as composer, two or three years later eliciting the admiration of Goethe, Weber, and Cherubini, whose predictions were fulfilled when the seventeen-year-old schoolboy presented to the world a masterpiece of the first water: the overture to Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream." Curiously, this ethereal work, full of elfishness, of delicate murmurs, and pastel shades, was composed in the same year as Weber's fairy opera "Oberon"; here are the two founders of that kind of music we identify so closely with the typically German romanticism of forest and glen, with the wonderful orchestral *colorit* that owes nothing to the heroes of orchestration, for this orchestral language is not only a craft but a genuine, deeply felt means of expression. And one of these two men was to be extolled as the only true "forerunner" of Wagner, the incarnation of German musical ideals and aspiration, while the other was excised as a cancerous growth on the body of German music.

The attitude of Hitler's Germany was, of course, to be expected, but it must be said that Mendelssohn—although always a favorite of the music-loving public—was often roundly deprecated by musicians of the twentieth century. Satiated with the watery effusions of the post-romantic composers at the turn of the century, they turned against all sentiment, and it became as fashionable to patronize Mendelssohn as it was to dismiss Rubinstein, or Rachmaninoff, or Grieg. Needless to say, Mendelssohn towers high above these heavy-handed charmers who lived on the crumbs of the heroic era of romanticism. If his "Songs Without Words" do contain some pieces whose sentimentalism is now faded, he also composed many of the finest examples of that instrumental lyricism which is so characteristic of the nineteenth century. With the waning of the great symphonic forms of the classic era that no longer suited the temper of the times something else had to be found; nothing was more original and influential than the piano music that Mendelssohn composed virtually without any models to guide him. In fact, it was he who became the guide. But this exceedingly well-trained musician had other virtues such as few of the musicians of the first post-Beethovenian generation possessed: a wonderful sense for the all but lost "large form," an impeccable craftsmanship, an unerring instinct for effective orchestral writing, and a serene assurance in carrying out his plans. Two of his symphonies

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belong among the best of the period between Beethoven and Brahms, and the same is true of much of his chamber music, his evocative overtures, and the violin concerto, the latter of which unquestionably ranks among the great masterpieces of the genre.

Having already mentioned Mendelssohn in the company of two members of the arbitrary triumvirate known as the Three B's, we have to examine his relations to the third—Bach. Mendelssohn was the first conductor to perform publicly Bach's St. Matthew Passion, and this at a time when the Bach renaissance was at its inception. The remarkable performance became a landmark in recent musical history, and the romanticists, in quest of the romance of bygone ages, immediately beatified the old cantor of St. Thomas'—and thoroughly misunderstood him, the only one properly to appreciate him being Brahms. Mendelssohn was no exception, yet in his oratorios he demonstrated that he derived more positive stylistic advantages from the study of Bach and Handel than did any of his contemporaries. Yet he, too, was lacking in the epic-dramatic strength of the great Biblical composers of the Baroque, and while there are some fine choral passages in "Paulus" and "Elijah," they are a bit too elegant and polished. It was precisely this quality in them that attracted Victorian England to their composer, in whom they saw a second Handel.

We must return once more to the "Midsummer Night's Dream" music, surely the most felicitous incidental music ever composed to a play. There is an interval of fifteen years between the creation of the scintillating overture and the other pieces, the dreamy *notturno*, the swift scherzo, and the jubilant wedding march—yet no one could detect a growth of maturity of creative artistry. They are all impeccable masterpieces written with a sure hand, a consummate knowledge of the medium, and a fine poetic imagination. It is as astonishing to observe such assuredness in the youth as it is disconcerting to see this perfection remain stationary. Perhaps it was the sheltered life he led, the loving care of the parental home, where the boy's every experiment was carried out by a good private orchestra, the absence of struggle and of the necessity for a fierce concentration of strength on which the creative process strives, or perhaps it was the nature of the classicistic romanticist who is a bit cautious and hesitates to abandon his equilibrium.

Only the fury and insane hatred of political and racial intolerance could deprive the Germans of one of their most national composers, whose music reverberates even in the sacrosanct dramas of Richard Wagner. Mendelssohn was one of the most lovable and engaging composers of recent times, and no musician worthy of his salt can sneer at a master of his stature.

PAUL HENRY LANG.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE HOLLOW *Agatha Christie* (Dodd, Mead: $2.50.)	Doctor found dead beside pool at English country house with gun-holding wife beside him—and Hercule Poirot approaching rapidly.	After Hercule gauges personal relationships of suspects and checks on gestures, looks, and unexpected actions the surprising end is in sight.	Good
AS GOOD AS DEAD *Thomas B. Dewey* (Jefferson House: $2.)	Return of long-absent girl to home town and subsequent violence gives hotel-keeper-sleuth Singer Batts pretty problem.	Mysterious old house, buried treasure, family skeletons, mauling mobsters—and such stuff. Interesting reverse—English finish.	Readable
YOU LEAVE ME COLD *Samuel Rogers* (Harper: $2.)	Young man dies suspiciously in Midwestern doctor's house, Navy nephew of Prof. Fraser does leg-work on odd crime.	Atmospherically excellent. Suspense at concert pitch all the way. Fraser's sleuthing eccentric but believable. Pay-off horrible and slightly incredible.	Goose-pimpler
DEATH IN HARLEY STREET *John Rhode* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Wealthy London doctor found poisoned in office. Dr. Priestley deduces 'twasn't murder, accident, or suicide—and produces "fourth alternative."	Extremely clever puzzle and very well fabricated. Not much action and great deal of talk—some of it boring.	Good enough

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REPORT ON THE CRITICS

(*Continued from page 17*)

But after the little fellow made his report, their audiences were restive. During the question period, they sometimes would get asked why they hadn't mentioned any thunderhead.

So they quickly called an emergency meeting of the Weather Prophets Guild and drew up a proclamation denouncing the little fellow as a prejudiced ignoramus who dared, on his first trip up the mountain, to take issue with the unanimous finding of learned authorities on this highly technical subject.

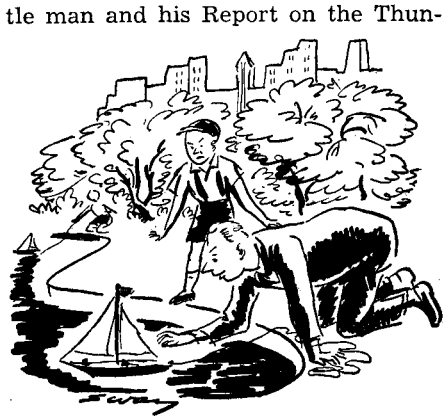
They said that he had got his data from sources hostile to pink lemonade and therefore pro-thundershower, and should himself be unmasked as an anti-picnickite.

This proclamation was released after it had been signed by the sixteen leading members of the Weather Prophets Guild, including such well-known lecturers, rain-haters, and picnic-lovers as Edgar Snow, John Hersey, and Quentin Reynolds. Whereupon everybody felt better, because now the little man and his report were discredited, so the people could go ahead hopefully packing chipped ice and rock salt around the freezers.

Now every fairy tale should have a happy ending, so this one should stop here. Because, if it had rained, when the first big drops began spotting the white kid shoes and bouncing off the paper lanterns, some angry citizens would have turned on the Weather Prophets Guild to demand what the hell kind of a forecast was this, anyway?

Some of the Prophets would reply gently that "we must understand thunderstorms, and learn to get along with them." Others would remind you that they had always said "Stalin is a realist." But all of them would quickly begin lecturing on topics other than the weather, such as atomic fission, with its accompanying sweetly pungent odor of baked Japanese.

And if anyone had recalled the little man and his Report on the Thunderhead, the lofty answer would have been, "Oh, him — well, he was always violently anti-picnic."



The moral is, never try to tell people on the day before Christmas that there isn't any Santa Claus. Let them find it out for themselves.

And I end on bended knee of suppliance to the sixteen correspondents who last year denounced my book, and particularly to Quentin Reynolds, John Hersey, and Edgar Snow, whose names were important enough to give weight to the list. These men are not, of course, Communists. They are not even time-tested fellow-travelers who stick up for the Soviet Union even when it is unpopular and the going gets rugged. They are simply fine, upstanding "progressives" who resent unfair slurs against Russia.

WELL, fellows, the dark forces of ignorant anti-Soviet prejudice have again busted loose in our land. I notice where Brooks Atkinson has recently returned from Russia muttering that the Kremlin doesn't want our friendship, and that artistic originality there is deader than Rutherford B. Hayes. Well, boys, where is your petition denouncing Brooks?

Brooks, of course, is yapped at for this by Comrade Zaslavsky in *Pravda* in the same gaudy language he used against me a year ago. Fellows, what are we waiting for? Hasn't anyone a pencil handy?

The nation, which was in peril a year ago when you were trying to holler me down, is in even greater danger today, for our army is back home and in Paris Comrade Molotov has the Honorable James Byrnes over the barrel, neatly spread out and exposed to the chill breeze of evening, with a barrel stave poised above. So why the delay?

Because, chums, Russia has not changed; it is still the same country under the same leadership which we saw during the war. But snuffling sentimentality on that subject is not so popular, either on the lecture platform or in the Cub Room of the Stork Club, as it was a year ago. So a little job of character-assassination on Brooks Atkinson will take real courage. And no one can accuse you today of capitalizing on temporary mob-hysteria to smear a colleague: quite the contrary, in fact.

So up, boys, and at him! Massage your tear glands and start sobbing that he has deliberately insulted the heroes of Stalingrad.

Why are you hanging back?

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The New Recordings

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	Recording Technique	*Surface*	
SCHUMANN, SYMPHONY #1 ("RHENISH"). Cleveland Symph. Leinsdorf. Columbia M 617 (4) $4.85	The better your equipment, the better it will sound. Good hall resonance.	A	A clean, brilliant performance, doing no harm to a somewhat verbose work; yet Koussevitzky's version (V M 655) is mellower, more Schumannesque. (It's out of print.)
GRIEG, SYMPHONIC DANCES ("Four Norwegian Dances"). Indianapolis Symph. Sevitsky. Victor M 1036 (3)....$3.85	Evidently another example of "orthocoustic" high-fidelity, in which highs are jacked up. Brilliant on small machines. Hall is too reverberant.	A to A—	Over-symphonic for their content; would sound better set for small orch. Sevitsky out-does Grieg—an over-dramatic performance.
BEETHOVEN, PATHETIQUE SONATA. Erno Balogh, pianist. VOX 611 (2).....$2.85	Good solid piano tone, though surface hiss dims clarity some.	B	An interesting interpretation; heavy, methodical, Bach-like, yet highly musical. Good one to set against the usual virtuoso versions.

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The standard source for your component parts is not the retail radio store but one of the big wholesale radio houses, which sell largely by mail order and give you big discounts on most radio and phonograph equipment. In the big cities there are smaller supply stores that offer the same discounts, over the counter. The best way to begin is to visit one of these places or send for their catalogues. From the bewilderment of unintelligible condensers, resistors, transformers, and general radio innards you'll be able to pick out some familiar basic items that will give you the lay of the land; from there on it's a matter of getting good advice, professional or otherwise—for there's plenty of room for a little unscrupulous dealing. If you'll scout around among your neighbor's children you may find a ten-year-old radio ham who can guide you perfectly through the maze, and if not the ten-year-olds, then the vets, who lived with makeshift radio the world over, and can, most of them, make amplifiers out of tomato cans if they have to.

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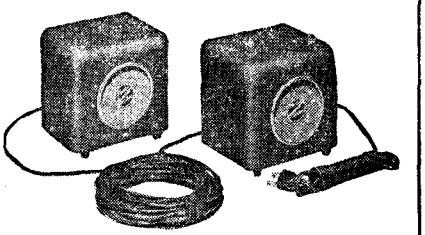

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the Phoenix Nest

SONNET IN AUTUMN

IF I could dwell forever in a land
Of changeless autumn I would ask no gift
Sweeter than sleeping fields and the slow drift
Of leaves, loamward, where beech and hemlock stand.
Never dark furrows filled with eager burning
Of spring's bright upthrust under sun and star;
Never impetuous April's mood should mar
That tranquil acreage born of my yearning.
How well I know that Duty calls it treason
To spend long hours in purposeless repose,
And that a dream of life with but one season
Is folly, such as if we prayed the rose
To pause in midbloom; yet forever calling
Are autumn fields and brown leaves falling . . . falling . . .

BLANCHE GOODMAN EISENDRATH.

* * *

Jack Luzzato of New York is getting rambunctious as follows:

> During the picayune erysipelas tournament when phoenix fledglings had rashes on their rhymes I was lurking in the shadows sure that game worthy of my fire was on the way. I refer to orange. Indiscreetly, you stuck your neck out and I am prepared to let go with both barrels. Watch out for your behinds, poets. Bang. Bang.
>
> I wonder why the poets bar Inge
> (The Gloomy Dean) when rhyming orange?
> Must be because their underpar ing-
> Enuity is stumped by orange.

See? Easy wasn't it?

And Earle Walbridge comes back with:

> Naturally I can't agree with Dr. Stern that my "ripple was erysipelas" is no rhyme. It's modified assonantal. In "The Craft of Poetry" (Dutton, 1929) Clement Wood, discussing assonance, states that "the ear, trained to expect perfect rhymes, is irritated by their absence; but the ear can accustom itself to the departure, and many subtle achievements in the use of assonance may be expected from poets of the future." I am a poet of the future, though I wouldn't advise Dr. Stern to wait; it probably will be a long, long time. Anyway, the image I conjured up is exactly the damfool thing Algernon Swinburne would do, lying there catching his deathacold.

Being one of those people who progressed beyond the aureate Princess, I noticed that Edmund Wilson, whom I should hardly conceive to be an E. Nesbit fan, named his book club in "Memoirs of Hecate County" the Treasure Seekers. I pricked up my ears when William McFee, reviewing Margaret Cole's "Beatrice Webb" in the *New York Sun*, remarked that he attended meetings of the Fabian Society as a young man. In response to an inquiry, Mr. McFee told me that he frequently saw Hubert Bland there, but didn't recall seeing E. Nesbit (Mrs. Bland), although he was familiar with her books. They may laugh when I begin to talk to the waiter about E. Nesbit, but she was a striking personality who is generally mentioned in any memoir of H. G. Wells or Bernard Shaw. Her biography by Doris Langley Moore deserves an American edition.

* * *

From Miss Margaret Neumann of Omaha, Nebraska:

> I believe you made a mistake in your June 29 issue of The Phoenix Nest in the item contributed by Mrs. Henry M. Rideout. One of her favorite books, she says, is "The Goodly Fellowship," by Rachel C. Schauffler. Now I may be wrong and there may be two "Goodly Fellowships," but I think you will find Mary Ellen Chase wrote a book called "A Goodly Fellowship" which was published by The Macmillan Company in 1939.

And speaking of odd volumes, Mrs. Mary Heath Lea of Fairhope, Alabama, informs me:

> Years ago a Philadelphia friend —also a Friend—sent me some old books. Among these was the *second* volume of the William Bell Scott autobiography to which you have referred in writing about Swinburne. Curiously enough there was no Volume I, nor have I ever seen one. Wonder what happened?

* * *

From Nelson Bond, himself, of Roanoke, Virginia:

> I have read, with great interest and greater appreciation the several letters to The Phoenix Nest commenting on the basic similarities of the play "Harvey" and my story, "Mr. Mergenthwirker's Lobblies."
>
> What even my kindly champions do not know is that there exists a three-act play version of the Lobblies, written by myself a year before "Harvey" appeared on Broadway. By an unhappy mischance, my playscript was lost in the office of a playbroker. While I awaited some word as to its fate, "Harvey" appeared, at least temporarily killing all chance of the Lobblies production. The Theatre Guild considered the venture long and seriously, but at last concluded—as did everyone else—that, under existent circumstances, my play, though written first, might be considered "too much like Harvey'."
>
> However, there is balm in Gilead. The dramatic version of "Mr. Mergenthwirker's Lobblies" was telecast on September 22 over NBC facilities on the "Broadway Preview" show, and in October Coward-McCann will publish my "Mr. Mergenthwirker's Lobblies and Other Fantastic Tales" . . . so those who wish to do so may finally investigate the degree of coincidental similarity between the two treatments.
>
> I hold, with stubborn pride, that the Lobblies appeal to a higher caste. Any inebriate can see Harvey; only the pure in heart can see Lobblies.

* * *

Katharine Day Little of Boston submits a few comments on contemporary speech:

AIN'T IT OFFAL?

People that say "Offal"
Seem to me
Not to be
Out of the top-droffal.

THE GREEKS AND ALL THAT

People that say
In a languid way,
"It's a clahssic!"
Make me cahssic.

PODDEN ME

There is a phrase one meets in lane or street,
At pent-house or in godden,
"Podden me!" But I can't, you see—
It's impossible to podden.

* * *

The following is meant to be taken *figuratively*, and need not shock anyone. At zoos I have observed the mandrill with genuine awe.

AN OBSERVATION CONCERNING MEN AND MANDRILLS

The mandrill, dolorous before,
Is radiant behind.
His fundament is rather more
Than gaudily designed.

The peacock with emblazoned tail,
The flashy parakeet
With bright enamelled plumage, fail
In seeking to compete

With such a prodigal array
In subtle hue and tint
Of colors merging to display
New wonders without stint.

How many out of all who show
Dull miens and sober minds
Might not reveal, could we but know,
Extravagant behinds!

RAYMOND HOSKEN.

I see that I said "figuratively." Well, let it stand!

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

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(Continued from page 41)

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 654

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

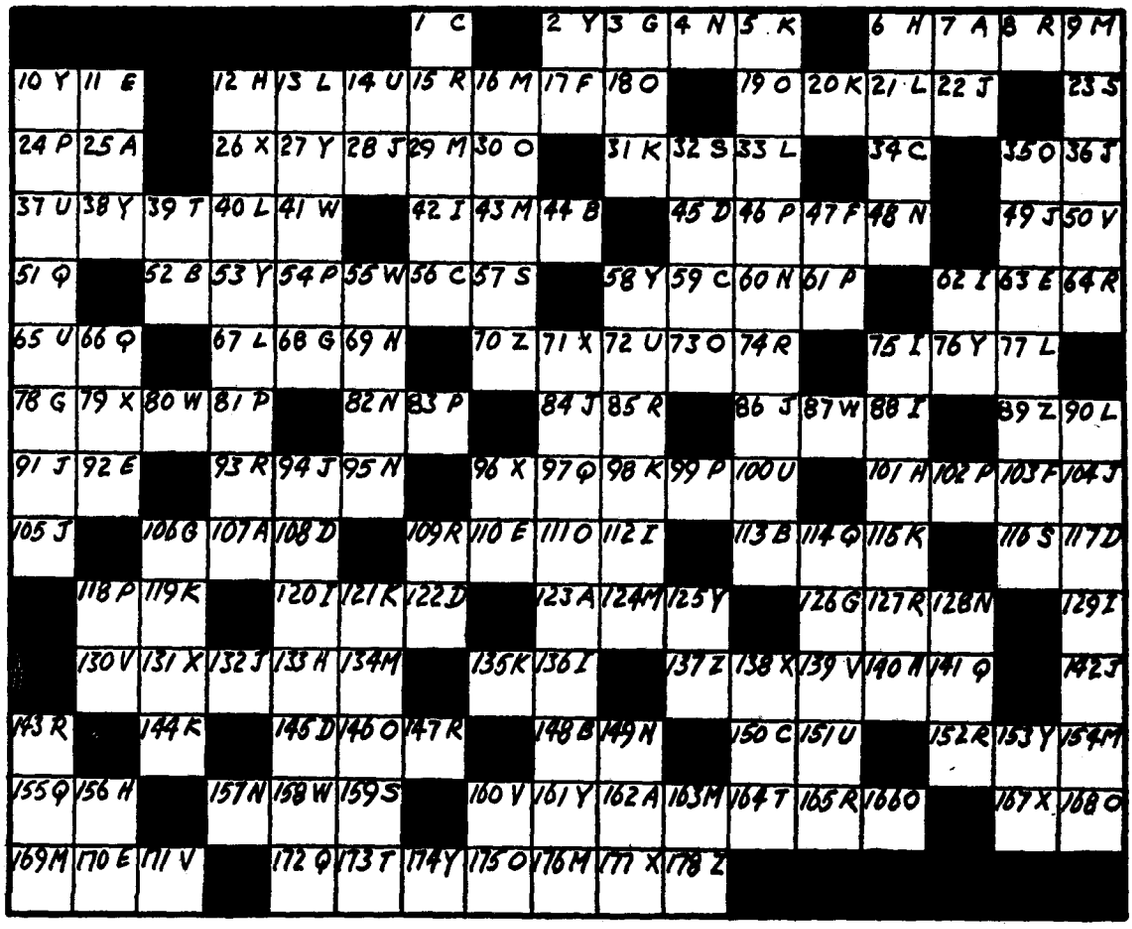
DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. English poet and satirist (1885-1940).	123 107 7 162 25
B. Beloved of Marpessa (Gr. Myth.)	148 44 113 52
C. A vampire; witch; sorceress.	56 34 150 1 59
D. Venetian painter of religious subjects (1480-1556).	145 122 45 117 108
E. Jots; particles.	63 110 92 170 11
F. Exclamation expressing triumph, surprise, etc., dependent on intonation.	47 17 103
G. The principle of universal intelligence or consciousness (Theos.)	78 3 68 126 106
H. To ascribe (with "to").	101 12 133 6 140 156
I. Last name (with Word P) of pseudonym signed to Thackeray's "Flore et Zéphyr."	75 42 112 88 120 129 62 136
J. Heads of some movement or exponents of some doctrine (2 wds.)	94 84 49 86 91 104 36 28 142 22 132
K. English playwright and fiction writer, collaborator with Word W in plays (1904-).	144 119 20 5 98 31 121 135 115
L. The great annual English horse race for three-year-old fillies, run at Epsom after the Derby (2 wds.)	67 13 90 77 21 40 33
M. Novel by author named in Word R.	176 163 16 124 43 134 9 154 29 169

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
N. Growing spontaneously but not native (Bot.)	157 128 4 69 149 48 82 60 95
O. Not spoiled or sullied.	168 30 19 146 175 111 18 73 166
P. First name with Word I.	83 24 61 54 102 46 118 99 81
Q. Things that are separated or disconnected from their fellows.	97 51 66 35 141 114 155 172
R. Author of Word M (English novelist 1803-73).	152 15 74 8 165 64 109 147 85 93 143 127
S. Period during which a widow or divorced woman may not marry (Moham. Law).	116 159 57 32 23
T. Grains of the cereal grass *Avena sativa*.	173 39 105 164
U. Belonging to the co-founder of the first woman's periodical in the U. S. (Philadelphia, 1830).	72 14 100 65 151 37
V. Mountain-ash tree.	160 50 130 139 171
W. English poet and playwright now living in the U. S. (1907-).	87 55 80 41 158
X. Father of Pocahontas.	138 26 96 167 79 177 131 71
Y. Valley in Yosemite National Park from which San Francisco draws its water supply.	2 153 125 174 58 53 161 38 27 76 10
Z. Large wild or domesticated oxen of Tibet and adjacent elevated parts of Central Asia.	178 70 89 137

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 30 of this issue.

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Yellow Tapers for Paris

a novel by

BRUCE MARSHALL

"Bruce Marshall writes with such easy and engaging warmth — his prose is at once deft and apparently effortless — that the importance of his matter is sometimes almost hidden behind the pleasant shimmer of the words. In Yellow Tapers for Paris, there is so much brightness and charm, so much real freshness and excitement that reading it one is frequently diverted by the phrasing from the fundamental seriousness of the theme. For out of its center of little, closeup experiences this book radiates its implications over a whole wide range of human activity. In a very true way it is the story, not only of Bigou and France, but of innumerable well-intentioned but puzzled, infirm, fumbling men living in the world of our time and making (often unknowingly) the mean, cumulative, deadly concessions which that world so constantly demands.

"A really remarkable characterization, rich in knowledge and compassion, yet always delicate, never forced, never obvious. For Bigou is here shown to be still a creature of tremendous and genuine moral dignity. As a human being, and as that alone, Bigou is profoundly important."

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